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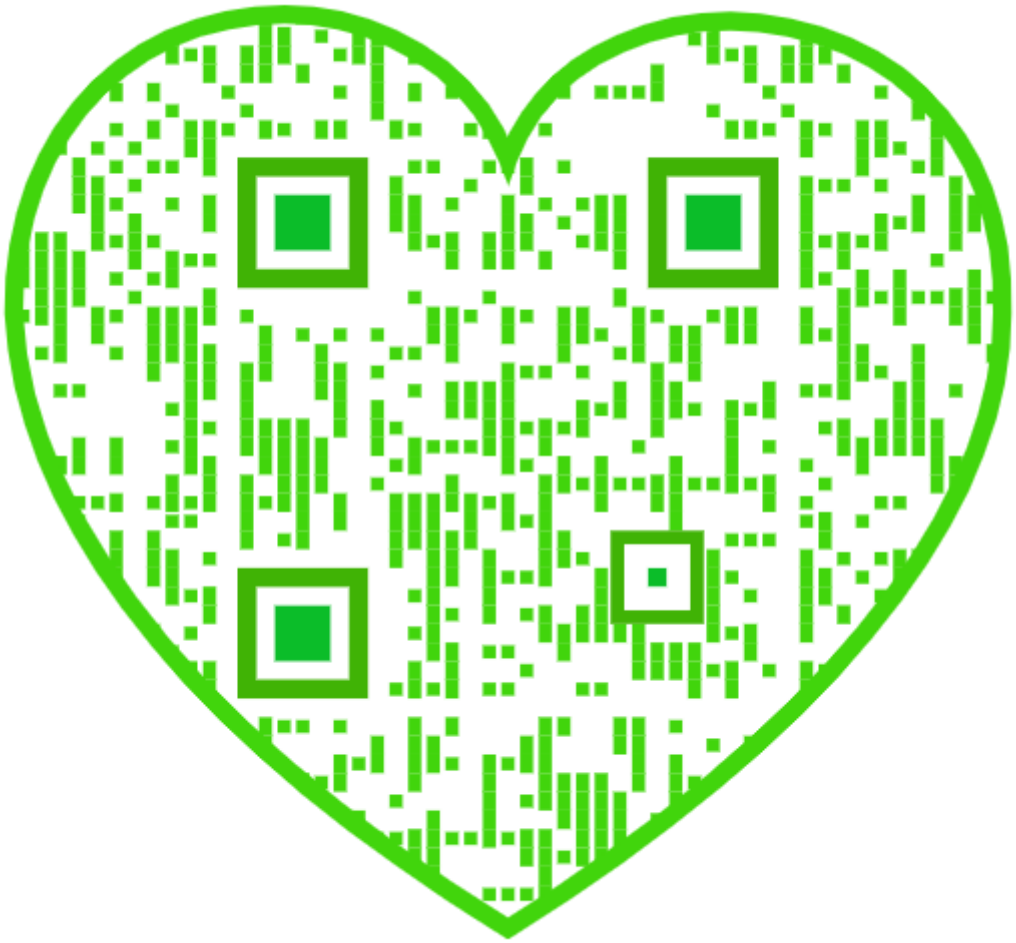

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After a painting by Howard Pyle.

General Andrew Jackson receiving the plaudits of his motley army after the victory at New Orleans.

SOME FORGOTTEN HEROES

AND THEIR PLACE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

BY

E. ALEXANDER POWELL

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

NEW YORK CHICAGO BOSTON

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FOREWORD

This book is a tribute to some men who have been forgotten by Fame. Though they won for us more than half the territory within our present borders, they lie for the most part in obscure and neglected graves, some of them under alien skies, their amazing exploits all too often unperpetuated in bronze or stone. Though their names hold small significance for their countrymen of the present generation, yet they played great parts in our national drama. It was the persistent and daring assaults made by such men as Bean and Nolan upon the Spanish boundaries which undermined the power of Spain upon this continent and paved the way for Travis, Bowie, Bonham, Crockett, and Houston to effect the liberation of Texas. Captain Reed of the *General Armstrong*, after holding off a British force twenty times the strength of his own, sunk his vessel rather than surrender. To a pirate and smuggler named Jean Lafitte, more than any other person save Andrew Jackson, we are indebted for saving New Orleans from capture and Louisiana from invasion. After two decades of history-making in Hindustan, Boyd came back to his own country and ably seconded William Henry Harrison in breaking the power of the great Indian confederation which threatened to check the white man's westward march. A missionary, Marcus Whitman, by the most daring and dramatic ride in history, during which he crossed the continent in the depths of winter, facing death al-

most every mile from cold, starvation, or Indians, prevented the Pacific Northwest from passing under the rule of England. Jedediah Smith blazed the route of the Overland Trail and showed us the way to California, and a quarter of a century later, Fremont, Ide, Sloat, and Stockton made the land beyond the Sierras ours.

Adventurers though certain of these men admittedly were—and what, pray, were Vasco da Gama and Magellan, Hawkins, Raleigh, and Drake?—I think you will agree with me, when you have read their stories, that there is in them remarkably little of which we need to feel ashamed and much of which we have reason to be proud. But, because they did their work unofficially, in what might aptly be described as "shirtsleeve warfare," because they went ahead without waiting for the tardy sanction of those who guided our ship of state, the deeds they performed have never received befitting recognition from the sedate and prosaic historians, the services they rendered have elicited but scant appreciation from those who follow by the trails they blazed, who grow rich from the mines they discovered, who dwell upon the lands they won. And that is why I ask you, as in the following pages I lead these forgotten heroes before you in imaginary review, to salute with respect and admiration this company of brave soldiers and gallant gentlemen who so stoutly upheld American traditions in many far corners of the world.

E. Alexander Powell.

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ADVENTURERS ALL

Even before the purchase of that vast inland basin known as Louisiana by Thomas Jefferson in 1803, a young Kentuckian named Philip Nolan entered into a contract with the Spanish governor of New Orleans to capture for him bands of wild horses on the plains of Texas. The venture ended in tragedy when the Spanish colonial commandant general surprised and attacked the little party and killed Nolan and several of his companions. Whereupon Ellis P. Bean, a mere boy of seventeen, took command and conducted a running fight against the pursuing Spaniards, until, almost exhausted, he accepted an offer of fair terms and surrendered. Immediately he and his companions were put into irons and marched off to prison in Mexico, where, after years of barbarous treatment, Bean finally escaped, joined the republican revolution against Spanish rule, and rose to a high position in the service of the Mexican Government.

ADVENTURERS ALL

THIS story properly begins in an emperor's bathtub. The bathtub was in the Palace of the Tuileries, and, immersed to the chin in its cologne-scented water, was Napoleon. The nineteenth century was but a three-year-old; the month was April, and the trees in the Tuileries Garden were just bursting into bud. The First Consul—he made himself Emperor a few weeks later—was taking his Sunday-morning bath. There was a scratch at the door—scratching having been substituted for knocking in the palace after the Egyptian campaign—and the Mameluke body-guard ushered into the bathroom Napoleon's brothers Joseph and Lucien.

How the conversation began between this remarkable trio of Corsicans is of small consequence. It is enough to know that Napoleon dumfounded his brothers by the blunt announcement that he had determined to sell the great colony of Louisiana—all that remained to France of her North American empire—to the United States. He made this astounding announcement, as Joseph wrote afterward, "with as little ceremony as our dear father would have shown in selling a vineyard." Incensed at Napoleon's cool assumption that the great overseas possession was his to dispose of as he saw fit, Joseph, his hot Corsican blood getting the better of his discretion, leaned over the tub and shook his clinched fist in the face of his august brother.

"What you propose is unconstitutional!" he cried. "If you attempt to carry it out I swear that I will be the first to oppose you!"

White with passion at this unaccustomed opposition, Napoleon raised himself until half his body was out of the opaque and frothy water.

"You will have no chance to oppose me!" he screamed, beside himself with anger. "I conceived this scheme, I negotiated it, and I shall execute it. I will accept the responsibility for what I do. Bah! I scorn your opposition!" And he dropped back into the bath so suddenly that the resultant splash drenched the future King of Spain from head to foot.

This extraordinary scene, which, ludicrous though it was, was to vitally affect the future of the United States, was brought to a sudden termination by the valet, who had been waiting with the bath-towels, shocked at the spectacle of a future Emperor and a future King quarrelling in a bathroom over the disposition of an empire, falling on the floor in a faint.

Though this narrative concerns itself, from beginning to end, with adventurers—if Bonaparte himself was not the very prince of adventurers, then I do not know the meaning of the word—it is necessary, for its proper understanding, to interject here a paragraph or two of contemporaneous history. In 1800 Napoleon, whose fertile brain was planning the re-establishment in America of that French colonial empire which a generation before had been destroyed by England, persuaded the King of Spain, by the bribe of a petty Italian principality, to cede Louisiana to the French. But in the next three years things turned out so contrary to his expectations that he was reluctantly compelled to abandon his scheme for colonial expansion and prepare for eventualities nearer home. The army he had sent to Haiti, and which he had intended to throw

into Louisiana, had wasted away from disease and in battle with the blacks under the skilful leadership of L'Ouverture until but a pitiful skeleton remained.

Meanwhile the attitude of England and Austria was steadily growing more hostile, and it did not need a telescope to see the war-clouds which heralded another great European struggle piling up on France's political horizon. Realizing that in the life-and-death struggle which was approaching, he could not be hampered with the defense of a distant colony, Napoleon decided that, if he was unable to hold Louisiana, he would at least put it out of the reach of his arch-enemy, England, by selling it to the United States. It was a master-stroke of diplomacy. Moreover, he needed money—needed it badly, too—for France, impoverished by the years of warfare from which she had just emerged, was ill prepared to embark on another struggle.

There were in Paris at this time two Americans, Robert R. Livingston and James Monroe, who had been commissioned by President Jefferson to negotiate with the French Government for the purchase of the city of New Orleans and a small strip of territory adjacent to it, so that the settlers in Kentucky and Tennessee might have a free port on the gulf. After months spent in diplomatic intercourse, during which Talleyrand, the French foreign minister, could be induced neither to accept nor reject their proposals, the commissioners were about ready to abandon the business in despair. I doubt, therefore, if there were two more astonished men in all Europe than the two Americans when Talleyrand abruptly asked them whether the United States would buy the whole of Louisiana and what price it would be willing to pay. It was as

though a man had gone to buy a cow and the owner had suddenly offered him his whole farm.

Though astounded and embarrassed, for they had been authorized to spend but two million dollars in the contemplated purchase, the Americans had the courage to shoulder the responsibility of making so tremendous a transaction, for there was no time to communicate with Washington and no one realized better than they did that Louisiana must be purchased at once if it was to be had at all. England and France were, as they knew, on the very brink of war, and they also knew that the first thing England would do when war was declared would be to seize Louisiana, in which case it would be lost to the United States forever. This necessity for prompt action permitted of but little haggling over terms, and on May 22, 1803, Napoleon signed the treaty which transferred the million square miles comprised in the colony of Louisiana to the United States for fifteen million dollars. Nor was the sale effected an instant too soon, for on that very day England declared war.

Now, in purchasing Louisiana, Jefferson, though he got the greatest bargain in history, found that the French had thrown in a boundary dispute to give good measure. The treaty did not specify the limits of the colony.

"What are the boundaries of Louisiana?" Livingston asked Talleyrand when the treaty was being prepared.

"I don't know," was the answer. "You must take it as we received it from Spain."

"But what did you receive?" persisted the American.

"I don't know," repeated the minister. "You are getting a noble bargain, monsieur, and you will doubtless make the best of it."

As a matter of fact, Talleyrand was telling the literal truth (which must have been a novel experience for him): he did not know. The boundaries of Louisiana had never been definitely established. It seems, indeed, to have come under the application of

> "The good old rule . . . the simple plan,
> That they shall take who have the power,
> And they shall keep who can."

Hence, though American territory and Spanish marched side by side for twenty-five hundred miles, it was found impossible to agree on a definite line of demarcation, the United States claiming that its new purchase extended as far westward as the Sabine River, while Spain emphatically asserted that the Mississippi formed the dividing line. Along about 1806, however, a working arrangement was agreed upon, whereby American troops were not to move west of the Red River, while Spanish soldiers were not to go east of the Sabine.

For the next fifteen years this arrangement remained in force, the strip of territory between these two rivers, which was known as the neutral ground, quickly becoming a recognized place of refuge for fugitives from justice, bandits, desperadoes, adventurers, and bad men. To it, as though drawn by a magnet, flocked the adventure-hungry from every corner of the three Americas.

The vast territory beyond the Sabine, then known as New Spain and a few years later, when it had achieved its independence, as Mexico, was ruled from the distant City of Mexico in true Spanish style. Military rule held full sway; civil law was unknown. Foreigners

without passports were imprisoned; trading across the Sabine was prohibited; the Spanish officials were suspicious of every one. Because this trade was forbidden was the very thing that made it so attractive to the merchants of the frontier, while the grassy plains and fertile lowlands beyond the Sabine beckoned alluringly to the stock-raiser and the settler. And though there was just enough danger to attract them there was not enough strength to awe them.

Jeering at governmental restrictions, Spanish and American alike, the frontiersmen began to pour across the Sabine into Texas in an ever-increasing stream. "Gone to Texas" was scrawled on the door of many a deserted cabin in Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky. On the Western river steamboats the officers' quarters on the hurricane-deck were called "the texas" because of their remoteness. "Go to Texas" became a slang phrase heard everywhere.

It was felt to be beyond the natural limits of the world, and the glamour which hovered over this mysterious and forbidden land lured to its conquest the most picturesque and hardy breed of men that ever foreran the columns of civilization. A contempt for the Spanish, a passion for adventure were the attitude of the people of our frontier as they strained impatiently against the Spanish boundaries. The American Government had nothing to do with winning Texas for the American people. The American frontiersmen won Texas for themselves, unaided either by statesmen or by soldiers.

Though these men wrote with their swords some of the most thrilling chapters in our history, their very existence has been ignored by most of our historians.

Though they performed deeds of valor of which any people would have reason to be proud, it was in an unofficial, shirt-sleeve sort of warfare, which the National Government neither authorized nor approved. Though they laid the foundations for adding an enormous territory to our national domain, no monuments or memorials have been erected to them; even their names hold no significance for their countrymen of the present generation. In short, they were filibusters, and that, in the eyes of those smug folk who believe that nothing can be meritorious that is done without the sanction of congresses and parliaments, completely damned them. They were American dreamers. Had they lived in the days of Cortes and Pizarro and Balboa, of Hawkins and Raleigh and Drake, history would have dealt more kindly with them.

The free-lance leaders, who, during the first quarter of the nineteenth century made the neutral ground a synonym for hair-raising adventure and desperate daring, were truly remarkable men. Five of them had held commissions in the army of the United States; one of them had commanded the French army sent to Ireland; another was a peer of France and had led a division at Waterloo; others had won rank and distinction under Napoleon, Bolivar, and Jackson.

The first of these adventurous spirits who for more than twenty years kept the Spanish and Mexican authorities in a fume of apprehension, was a young Kentuckian named Philip Nolan. He was the first American explorer of Texas and the first man to publish a description of that region in the English language. He spent his boyhood in Frankfort, Kentucky, and as a young man turned up in New Orleans, then under

Spanish rule, having been, apparently, a person of considerable importance in the little city. Having heard rumors that immense droves of mustangs roamed the plains of Texas and seeing for himself that the Spanish troopers in Louisiana were badly in need of horses, he told the Spanish governor that if he would agree to purchase the animals from him at a fixed price per head and would give him a permit for the purpose, he would organize an expedition to capture wild horses in Texas and bring them back to New Orleans.

The governor, who liked the young Kentuckian, promptly signed the contract, gave the permit, and Nolan, with a handful of companions, crossed the Sabine into Texas, corralled his horses, brought them to New Orleans, and was paid for them. It was a profitable transaction for every one concerned. It was so successful that another year Nolan did it again. On the proceeds he went to Natchez, married the beauty of the town, and built a home. But along toward the close of 1800 the governor wanted remounts again, for the Spanish cavalrymen seemed incapable of taking even ordinary care of their horses. So Nolan, who was, I fancy, already growing a trifle weary of the tameness of domestic life, enlisted the services of a score of frontiersmen as adventure-loving as himself, kissed his bride of a year good-by, and, after showing his passports to the American border patrol and satisfying them that his venture had the approval of the Spanish authorities, once more crossed the Sabine into Texas.

For a proper understanding of what occurred it is necessary to explain that, though Louisiana was under the jurisdiction of the Spanish Foreign Office (for this was before the province had been ceded to France),

Texas was under the control of the Spanish Colonial Office. Between these two branches of the government the bitterest jealousy existed, and a passport issued by one was as likely as not to be disregarded by the other. In fact, the colonial officials were only too glad of an opportunity to humiliate and embarrass those connected with the Foreign Office. But Nolan and his men, ignorant of this departmental jealousy and conscious that they were engaged in a perfectly innocent enterprise, went ahead with their business of capturing and breaking horses.

Crossing the Trinity, they found themselves on the edge of an immense rolling prairie which, as they advanced, became more and more arid and forbidding. There were no trees, not even underbrush. The buffaloes, though once numerous, had disappeared, and for nine days the little company had to subsist on the flesh of mustangs. They eventually reached the banks of the Brazos, however, where they found plenty of elk and deer, some buffalo, and "wild horses by thousands." Establishing a camp upon the present site of Waco, they built a stockade and captured and corralled three hundred head of horses.

While lounging about the camp-fire one night, telling the stories and singing the songs of the frontier and thinking, no doubt, of the folks at home, a force of one hundred and fifty Spaniards, commanded by Don Nimesio Salcedo, commandant-general of the northeastern provinces, creeping up under cover of the darkness, succeeded in surrounding the unsuspecting Americans, who, warned of the proximity of strangers by the restlessness of their horses, retreated into a square enclosure of logs which they had built as a protection

against an attack by Indians. At daybreak the Spaniards opened fire, and Nolan fell with a bullet through his brain.

The command of the expedition then devolved upon Ellis P. Bean, a boy of seventeen, who, from the scanty shelter of the log pen, continued a resistance that was hopeless from the first. Every one of the Americans was a dead shot and at fifty paces could hit a dollar held between a man's fingers, but they were vastly outnumbered, they were unprovisioned for a siege, and, as a final discouragement, the Spaniards now brought up a swivel-gun and opened on them with grape. Bean urged his men to follow him in an attempt to capture this field-piece. "It's nothing more than death, boys," he told them, "and if we stay here we shall be killed anyway." But his men were falling dead about him as he spoke, and the eleven left alive decided that their only chance, and that was slim enough, Heaven knows, lay in an immediate retreat.

Filling their powder-horns and bullet-pouches and loading the balance of their ammunition on the back of a negro slave named Cæsar, they started off across the prairie on their hopeless march, the Spaniards hanging to the flanks of the little party as wolves hang to the flank of a dying steer. All that day they plodded eastward under the broiling sun, bringing down with their unerring rifles those Spaniards who were incautious enough to venture within range. But at last they were forced, by lack of food and water, to accept the offer of the Spanish commander to permit them to return to the United States unharmed if they would surrender and promise not to enter Texas again.

No sooner had they given up their arms, however,

than the Spaniards, afraid no longer, put their prisoners in irons and marched them off to San Antonio, where they were kept in prison for three months; then to San Luis Potosi, where they were confined for sixteen months more, eventually being forwarded, still in irons, to Chihuahua, where, in January, 1804, they were tried by a Spanish court, were defended by a Spanish lawyer, were acquitted, and the judge ordered their release. But Salcedo, who had become the governor of the province, determined that the hated *gringos* should not thus easily escape, countermanded the findings of the court, and forwarded the papers in the case to the King of Spain.

The King, by a decree issued in February, 1807, after these innocent Americans had already been captives for nearly seven years, ordered that one out of every five of them should be hung, and the rest put at hard labor for ten years. But when the decree reached Chihuahua there were only nine prisoners left, two of them having died from the hardships to which they had been subjected. Under the circumstances the judge, who was evidently a man of some compassion, construed the decree as meaning that only one of the remaining nine should be put to death.

On the morning of the 9th of November, 1807, a party of Spanish officials proceeded to the barracks where the Americans were confined and an officer read the King's barbarous decree. A drum was brought, a tumbler and dice were set upon it, and around it, blindfolded, knelt the nine participants in this lottery of death. Some day, no doubt, when time has accorded these men the justice of perspective, Texas will commission a famous artist to paint the scene: the turquoise sky, the yellow

sand, the sun glare on the whitewashed adobe of the barrack walls, the little, brown-skinned soldiers in their soiled and slovenly uniforms, the Spanish officers, gorgeous in scarlet and gold lace, awed in spite of themselves by the solemnity of the occasion, and, kneeling in a circle about the drum, in their frayed and tattered buckskin, the prison pallor on their faces, the nine Americans—cool, composed, and unafraid.

Ephraim Blackburn, a Virginian and the oldest of the prisoners, took the fatal glass and with a hand which did not tremble—though I imagine that he whispered a little prayer—threw 3 and 1 4
Lucian Garcia threw 3 and 4..... 7
Joseph Reed threw 6 and 5..... 11
David Fero threw 5 and 3..... 8
Solomon Cooley threw 6 and 5..... 11
Jonah Walters threw 6 and 1..... 7
Charles Ring threw 4 and 3..... 7
William Dawlin threw 4 and 2..... 6
Ellis Bean threw 4 and 1..... 5

Whereupon they took poor Ephraim Blackburn out and hanged him.

After Blackburn's execution three of the remaining prisoners were set at liberty, but Bean, with four of his companions, all heavily ironed, were started off under guard for Mexico City. Any one who questions the assertion that fact is stranger than fiction will change his mind after hearing of Bean's subsequent adventures. They read like the wildest and most improbable of dime novels. When the prisoners reached Salamanca a young and strikingly beautiful woman, evidently attracted by Bean's youth and magnificent physique,

managed to approach him unobserved and asked him in a whisper if he did not wish to escape. (As if, after his years of captivity and hardship, he could have wished otherwise!) Then she disappeared as silently and mysteriously as she had come.

The next day the señora, who, as it proved, was the girl wife of a rich old husband, by bribing the guard, contrived to see Bean again. She told him quite frankly that her husband, whom she had been forced to marry against her will, was absent at his silver-mines, and suggested that, if Bean would promise not to desert her, she would find means to effect his escape and that they could then fly together to the United States. It shows the manner of man this American adventurer was that, on the plea that he could not desert his companions in misfortune, he declined her offer. The next day, as the prisoners once again took up their weary march to the southward, the señora slipped into Bean's hand a small package. When an opportunity came for him to open it he found that it contained a letter from his fair admirer, a gold ring, and a considerable sum of money.

Instead of being released upon their arrival at the City of Mexico, as they had been led to expect, the Americans were marched to Acapulco, on the Pacific, then a port of great importance because of its trade with the Philippines. Here Bean was placed in solitary confinement, the only human beings he saw for many months being the jailer who brought him his scanty daily allowance of food and the sentry who paced up and down outside his cell. Had it not been for a white lizard which he found in his dungeon and which, with incredible patience, he succeeded in taming, he would have gone mad from the intolerable solitude. Learn-

ing from the sentinel that one of his companions had been taken ill and had been transferred to the hospital, Bean, who was a resourceful fellow, prepared his pulse by striking his elbows on the floor and then sent for the prison doctor.

Though he was sent to the hospital, as he had anticipated, not only were his irons not removed but his legs were placed in stocks, and, on the theory that eating is not good for a sick man, his allowance of food was greatly reduced, his meat for a day consisting of the head of a chicken. When Bean remonstrated with the priest over the insufficient nourishment he was receiving, the padre told him that if he wasn't satisfied with what he was getting he could go to the devil. Whereupon, his anger overpowering his judgment, Bean hurled his plate at the friar's shaven head and laid it open. For this he was punished by having his head put in the stocks, in an immovable position, for fifteen days. When he recovered from the real fever which this barbarous punishment brought on, he was only too glad to go back to the solitude of his cell and his friend the lizard.

While being taken back to prison, Bean, who had succeeded in concealing on his person the money which the señora in Salamanca had given him, suggested to his guards that they stop at a tavern and have something to drink. A Spaniard never refuses a drink, and they accepted. So skilfully did he ply them with liquor that one of them fell into a drunken stupor while the other became so befuddled that Bean found no difficulty in enticing him into the garden at the back of the tavern on the plea that he wished to show him a certain flower. As the man was bending over to examine the

plant to which Bean had called his attention, the American leaped upon his back and choked him into unconsciousness.

Heavily manacled though he was, Bean succeeded in clambering over the high wall and escaped to the woods outside the city, where he filed off his irons with the steel he used for striking fire. Concealing himself until nightfall, he slipped into the town again, where he found an English sailor who, upon hearing his pitiful story, smuggled him aboard his vessel and concealed him in a water-cask. But, just as the anchor was being hoisted and he believed himself free at last, a party of Spanish soldiers boarded the vessel and hauled him out of his hiding-place—he had been betrayed by the Portuguese cook. For this attempt at escape he was sentenced to eighteen months more of solitary confinement.

One day, happening to overhear an officer speaking of having some rock blasted, Bean sent word to him that he was an expert at that business, whereupon he was taken out and put to work. Before he had been in the quarry a week he succeeded in once more making his escape. Travelling by night and hiding by day, he beat his way up the coast, only to be retaken some weeks later. When he was brought before the governor of Acapulco that official went into a paroxysm of rage at sight of the American whose iron will he had been unable to break either by imprisonment or torture.

Bean, who had reached such a stage of desperation that he didn't care what happened to him, looking the governor squarely in the eye, told him, in terms which seared and burned, exactly what he thought of him and defied him to do his worst. That official, at his wits' end to know how to subdue the unruly American, gave

orders that he was to be chained to a gigantic mulatto, the most dangerous criminal in the prison, the latter being promised a year's reduction in his sentence if he would take care of his yokemate, whom he was authorized to punish as frequently as he saw fit. But the punishing was the other way around, for Bean pommelled the big negro so terribly that the latter sent word to the governor that he would rather have his sentence increased than to be longer chained to the mad Americano.

By this time Bean had every one in the castle, from the governor to the lowest warder, completely terrorized, for they recognized that he was desperate and would stop at nothing. He was, in fact, such a hard case that the governor of Acapulco wrote to the viceroy that he could do nothing with him and begged to be relieved of his dangerous prisoner. The latter, in reply, sent an order for his removal to the Spanish penal settlement in the Philippines. But while awaiting a vessel the revolt led by Morelos, the Mexican patriot, broke out, and a rebel army advanced on Acapulco. The prisons of New Spain had been emptied to obtain recruits to fill the Spanish ranks, and Bean was the only prisoner left in the citadel. The Spanish authorities, desperately in need of men, offered him his liberty if he would help to defend the town. Bean agreed, his irons were knocked off, he was given a gun, and became a soldier. But he felt that he owed no loyalty to his Spanish captors; so, when an opportunity presented itself a few weeks later, he went over to Morelos, taking with him a number of the garrison.

A born soldier, hard as nails, amazingly resourceful and brave to the point of rashness, he quickly won the

confidence and friendship of the patriot leader, who commissioned him a colonel in the Republican army. When Morelos left Acapulco to continue his campaign in the south, he turned the command of the besieging forces over to the ex-convict, who, a few weeks later, carried the city by storm. It must have been a proud moment for the American adventurer, not yet thirty years of age, when he stood in the plaza of the captured city and received the sword of the governor who had treated him with such fiendish cruelty.*

When the story of the treatment of Nolan and his companions trickled back to the settlements and was repeated from village to village and from house to house, every repetition served to fan the flame of hatred of everything Spanish, which grew fiercer and fiercer in the Southwest as the years rolled by. From the horror and indignation aroused along the frontier by the treatment of these men, whom the undiscerning historians have unjustly described as filibusters, sprang that movement which ended, a quarter of a century later, in freeing Texas forever from the cruelties of Latin rule. Thus it came about that Nolan and his companions did not die in vain.

* In 1814 Bean was sent by General Morelos, then president of the revolutionary party in Mexico, on a mission to the United States to procure aid for the patriot cause. At the port of Nautla he found a vessel belonging to Lafitte, an account of whose exploits will be found in "The Pirate Who Turned Patriot," which conveyed him to the headquarters of the pirate chief, at Barataria. Upon informing Lafitte of his mission, the buccaneer had him conveyed to New Orleans, where Bean found an old acquaintance in General Andrew Jackson, upon whose invitation he took command of one of the batteries on the 8th of January and fought by the side of Lafitte in that battle. Colonel Bean eventually rose to high rank under the Mexican republic, married a Mexican heiress, and died on her hacienda near Jalapa in 1846.

WHEN WE SMASHED THE PROPHET'S POWER

Sometimes a mere incident may influence profoundly the turn of history in ways impossible at the time to foretell. In 1811 a battle with the Indians on the banks of the Wabash River, at that time the outermost picket-line of American civilization, started a chain of circumstances which ended in the downfall of Napoleon; launched the youthful territorial governor, William Henry Harrison, on the road to the presidency; broke the power of the Indian Confederacy which under Tecumseh stood as a barrier to the advance of white settlements in Indiana; and pushed forward a quarter of a century the development of our West.

WHEN WE SMASHED THE PROPHET'S POWER

It is a curious and interesting fact that, just as in the year 1754 a collision between French and English scouting parties on the banks of the Youghiogheny River, deep in the American wilderness, began a war that changed the map of Europe, so in 1811 a battle on the banks of the Wabash between Americans and Indians started an avalanche which ended by crushing Napoleon.

The nineteenth century was still in its infancy at the time this story opens; the war of the Revolution had been over barely a quarter of a century, and a second war with England was shortly to begin. Though the borders of the United States nominally extended to the Rockies, the banks of the Mississippi really marked the outermost picket-line of civilization.

Beyond that lay a vast and virgin wilderness, inconceivably rich in minerals, game, and timber, but still in the power of more or less hostile tribes of Indians. Up to 1800 the whole of that region lying beyond the Ohio, including the present States of Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, and Missouri, was officially designated as the Northwest Territory, but in that year the northern half of this region was organized as the Indian Territory or, as it came to be known in time, the Territory of Indiana.

The governor of this great province was a young man named William Henry Harrison. This youth—he was only twenty-seven at the time of his appointment—was

invested with one of the most extraordinary commissions ever issued by our government. In addition to being the governor of a Territory whose area was greater than that of the German Empire, he was commander-in-chief of the Territorial militia, Indian agent, land commissioner, and sole lawgiver. He had the power to adopt from the statutes upon the books of any of the States any and every law which he deemed applicable to the needs of the Territory. He appointed all the judges and other civil officials and all military officers below the rank of general. He possessed and exercised the authority to divide the Territory into counties and townships. He held the prerogative of pardon. His decision as to the validity of existing land grants, many of which were technically worthless, was final, and his signature upon a title was a remedy for all defects. As the representative of the United States in its relations with the Indians, he held the power to negotiate treaties and to make treaty payments.

Governor Harrison was admittedly the highest authority on the northwestern Indians. He kept his fingers constantly on the pulse of Indian sentiment and opinion and often said that he could forecast by the conduct of his Indians, as a mariner forecasts the weather by the aid of a barometer, the chances of war and peace for the United States so far as they were controlled by the cabinet in London. The remark, though curious, was not surprising. Uneasiness would naturally be greatest in regions where the greatest irritation existed and which were under the least control.

Such a danger spot was the Territory of Indiana. It occupied a remote and perilous position, for northward and westward the Indian country stretched to the Great

Lakes and the Mississippi, unbroken save by the military posts at Fort Wayne and Fort Dearborn (now Chicago) and a considerable settlement of whites in the vicinity of Detroit. Some five thousand Indian warriors held this vast region and would have been abundantly able to expel every white man from Indiana had their organization been as strong as their numbers. And the whites were no less eager to expel the Indians.

During the first decade of the nineteenth century there was really no perfect peace with any of the Indian tribes west of the Ohio, and Harrison's abilities as a soldier and a diplomatist were taxed to the utmost to prevent the skirmish-line, as the chain of settlements and trading-posts which marked our westernmost frontier might well be called, from being turned into a battle-ground. Harrison's most formidable opponent in his task of civilizing the West was the Shawnee chieftain Tecumseh, perhaps the most remarkable of American Indians.

Though not a chieftain by birth, Tecumseh had risen by the strength of his personality and his powers as an orator to a position of altogether extraordinary influence and power among his people. So great was his reputation for bravery in battle and wisdom in council that by 1809 he had attained the unique distinction of being, to all intents and purposes, the political leader of all the Indians between the Ohio and the Mississippi.

With the vision of a prophet, Tecumseh saw that if this immense territory was once opened to settlement by whites the game upon which the Indians had to depend for sustenance must soon be exterminated and that in a few years his people would have to move to strange and distant hunting-grounds. Taking this as

his text, he preached a gospel of armed resistance to the white man's encroachments at every tribal council-fire from the land of the Chippewas to the country of the Creeks.

Throughout his campaign of proselytism Tecumseh was ably seconded by one of his triplet brothers, Elkswatana, known among the Indians as "the Prophet." The latter, profiting by the credulity and superstition of the red men, obtained a great reputation as a medicine-man and seer by means of his charms, incantations, and pretended visions of the Great Spirit, thus making himself a most valuable ally of Tecumseh in the great conspiracy which the latter was secretly hatching. Meanwhile the relations between the Americans and their neighbors across the Canadian border had become strained almost to the breaking point, the situation being aggravated by the fact that the British were secretly encouraging Tecumseh in spreading his propaganda of resistance to the United States and were covertly supplying the Indians with arms and ammunition for the purpose.

The winter of 1809–10, therefore, was marked by Indian outrages along the whole length of the frontier. And there were other agencies, more remote but none the less effective, at work creating discontent among the Indians. It seems a far cry from the prairies to the Tuileries, from an Indian warrior to a French Emperor, but when Napoleon's decree of what was virtually a universal blockade imposed terrible hardships on American shipping as well as on the British commerce at which it was aimed, even the savage of the wilderness was affected. It clogged and almost closed the chief markets for his furs, and prices dropped so low that Indian

hunters were hardly able to purchase the powder and shot with which to kill their game. At the beginning of 1810, therefore, the Indians were ripe for any enterprise that promised them relief and independence.

In the spring of 1808 Tecumseh, the Prophet, and their followers had established themselves on the banks of the Wabash, near the mouth of the Tippecanoe River, about seven miles to the north of the present site of Lafayette, Indiana. Strategically, the situation was admirably chosen, for Vincennes, where Harrison had his headquarters, lay one hundred and fifty miles below and could be reached in four and twenty hours by canoe down the Wabash; Fort Dearborn was a hundred miles to the northwest; Fort Wayne the same distance to the northeast; and, barring a short portage, the Indians could paddle their canoes to Detroit in one direction or to any part of the Ohio or the Mississippi in the other. Thus they were within striking distance of the chief military posts on the frontier and within easy reach of their British friends at Malden.

On this spot the Indians, in obedience to a command which the Prophet professed to have received in a dream from the Great Spirit, built a sort of model village, where they assiduously tilled the soil and shunned the fire-water of the whites. For a year or more after the establishment of Prophet's Town, as the place was called, things went quietly enough, but when it became known that Harrison had obtained the cession of the three million acres in the valley of the Wabash already referred to, the smouldering resentment of Tecumseh and his followers was fanned into flame, the Indians refusing to receive the "annuity salt" sent them in accordance with the terms of the treaty and threatened to

kill the boatmen who brought it, whom they called "American dogs."

Early in the following summer Harrison sent word to Tecumseh that he would like to see him, and on August 12, 1810, the Indian chief with four hundred armed warriors arrived at the governor's headquarters at Vincennes. The meeting between the white man who stood for civilization and the red man who stood for savagery took place in a field outside the stockaded town. The youthful governor, short of stature, lean of body, and stern of face, sat in a chair under a spreading tree, surrounded by a group of his officials: army officers, Territorial judges, scouts, interpreters, and agents. Opposite him, ranged in a semicircle on the ground, were Tecumseh, his brother, the Prophet, and a score or more of chiefs, while back of them, row after row of blanketed forms and grim, bepainted faces, sat his four hundred fighting men.

Tecumseh had been warned that his braves must come to the conference unarmed, and to all appearances they were weaponless, but no one knew better than Harrison that concealed beneath the folds of each warrior's blanket was a tomahawk and a scalping-knife. Nor, aware as he was of the danger of Indian treachery, had he neglected to take precautions, for the garrison of the town was under arms, the muzzles of field-guns peered through apertures in the log stockade, and a few paces away from the council, ready to open fire at the first sign of danger, were a score of soldiers with loaded rifles. In reply to Harrison's formal greeting, Tecumseh rose to his feet, presenting a most striking and impressive figure as he stood, drawn to his full height, with folded arms and granite features, the sunlight playing

After a painting by Stanley M. Arthurs.

William Henry Harrison's conferences with Tecumseh at Vincennes, Indiana.

on his copper-colored skin, on his belt and moccasins of beaded buckskin, and on the single eagle's feather which slanted in his hair.

The address of the famous warrior statesman consisted of a recital of the wrongs which the Indian had suffered at the hands of the white man. It was a story of chicanery and spoliation and oppression which Tecumseh told, and those who listened to it, white men and red alike, knew that it was very largely true. He told how the Indians, the real owners of the land, had been steadily driven westward and ever westward, first beyond the Alleghanies, and then beyond the Ohio, and now beyond the Missouri. He told how the white men had attempted to create dissension among the Indians to prevent their uniting, how they had bribed the stronger tribes and coerced the weaker, how again and again they had tried to goad the Indians into committing some overt act that they might use it as an excuse for seizing more of their land. He told how the whites, jeering at the sacredness of treaty obligations, systematically debauched the Indians by selling them whiskey; how they trespassed on the Indians' lands and slaughtered the game on which the Indians depended for support; of how, when the Indians protested, they were often slaughtered, too; and of how the white men's courts, instead of condemning the criminal, usually ended by congratulating him. He declared that things had come to a pass where the Indians must fight or perish, that the Indians were one people and that the lands belonging to them as a race could not be disposed of by individual tribes, that an Indian confederacy had been formed which both could and would fight every step of the white man's further advance.

As Tecumseh continued, his pronunciation became more guttural, his terms harsher, his gestures more excited, his argument changed into a warlike harangue. He played upon the Indian portion of his audience as a maestro plays upon a violin, until, their passions mastering their discretion, they sprang to their feet with a whoop, brandishing their tomahawks and knives. In the flutter of an eyelash everything was in confusion. The waiting soldiers dashed forward like sprinters, cocking their rifles as they ran. The officers jerked loose their swords, and the frontiersmen snatched up their long-barrelled weapons. But Harrison was quickest of all, for, drawing and cocking a pistol with a single motion, he thrust its muzzle squarely into Tecumseh's face. "Call off your men," he thundered, "or you're a dead Indian!" Tecumseh, realizing that he had overplayed his part and appreciating that this was an occasion when discretion was of more avail than valor, motioned to his warriors, and they silently and sullenly withdrew.

But it was no part of Tecumseh's plan or that of the British who were behind him to bring on a war at this time, when their preparations were as yet incomplete; so the following morning Tecumseh, who had little to learn about the game of diplomacy, called on Harrison, expressed with apparent sincerity his regret for the violence into which his young men had been led by his words, and asked to have the council resumed. Harrison well knew the great ability and influence of Tecumseh and was anxious to conciliate him, for, truth to tell, the Americans were no more prepared for war at this time than were the Indians.

When asked whether he intended to persist in his

opposition to the cessions of territory in the valley of the Wabash, Tecumseh firmly asserted his intention to adhere to the old boundary, though he made it clear that, if the governor would prevail upon the President to give up the lands in question and would agree never to make another treaty without the consent of all the tribes, he would pledge himself to be a faithful ally of the United States. Otherwise he would be obliged to enter into an alliance with the English. Harrison told him that the American Government would never agree to his suggestions. "Well," rejoined Tecumseh, as though he had expected the answer he received, "as the Great Chief is to decide the matter, I hope the Great Spirit will put sense enough into his head to induce him to direct you to give up the land. True, he is so far off that he will not be injured by the war. It is you and I who will have to fight it out while he sits in his town and drinks his wine."

It only needed this open declaration of his hostile intentions by Tecumseh to convince Harrison that the time had come to strike, and strike hard. If the peril of the great Indian league of which Tecumseh had boasted was to be averted, it must be done before that confederation became too strongly organized to shatter. There was no time to be lost. Harrison promptly issued a call for volunteers to take part in a campaign against the Indians, at the same time despatching a messenger to Washington requesting the loan of a regiment of regulars to stiffen the raw levies who would compose the major part of the expedition. News of Harrison's call for men spread over the frontier States as though disseminated by wireless, and soon the volunteers came pouring in: frontiersmen from Kentucky and Tennessee

in fur caps and hunting-shirts of buckskin; woodsmen from the forests of Michigan and Wisconsin, long-barrelled rifles on their shoulders and powder-horns slung from their necks; militiamen from Indiana and Illinois, and grizzled Indian-fighters from the towns along the river and the backwoods settlements, who volunteered as much from love of fighting as from hatred of the Indians.

Then, one day, almost before Harrison realized that they had started, a column of dusty, footsore soldiery came tramping into Vincennes with the unmistakable swing of veterans. It was the 4th Regiment of United States Infantry, commanded by Colonel John Parker Boyd, who, upon receiving orders from Washington to hurry to Harrison's assistance, had put his men on flatboats at Pittsburg, where the regiment was stationed, floated them down to the falls of the Ohio, and marched them overland to Harrison's headquarters at Vincennes, accomplishing the four-hundred-mile journey in a time which made that veteran frontiersman open his eyes with astonishment when he heard it.

Boyd was one of the most picturesque figures which our country has ever produced. Born in Newburyport in 1764, the last British soldier had left our shores before he was old enough to realize the ambition of his life by obtaining a commission in the American army. But his was not the disposition which could content itself with the tedium of garrison life in time of peace; so, before he had passed his four-and-twentieth birthday he had handed in his papers and taken passage for India. Entering the service of the Nizam of Hyderabad, he rose to the command of a cavalry division, eventually resigning from the Nizam's service to organize an army

of his own. The horses, elephants, and guns were his personal property, and he rented his army to those native princes who stood in need of its services and were able to pay for them, very much as a garage rents an automobile.

Foreseeing, however, the eventual conquest of India by the British and realizing that it would mean the end of independent soldiering in that country, he sold his army, elephants and all, to an Italian soldier of fortune and turned his face toward his native land once more. At that time soldiering was neither a very popular nor a very profitable profession in the United States, so that Boyd, whose reputation as a daring leader and a rigid disciplinarian had preceded him, had no difficulty in again obtaining a commission under his own flag and in the service of his own country, being offered by the government and promptly accepting the colonelcy of the 4th Regiment of Foot. An October evening in 1811, then, saw him riding into Vincennes at the head of his travel-weary regulars, in response to Governor Harrison's request for reinforcements.

The news brought in by the scouts that war-dances were going on in the Indian villages and that the threatened storm was about to break served to hasten Harrison's preparations. The small, but exceedingly businesslike, expedition which marched out of Vincennes on the 1st day of November under the leadership of Governor Harrison, with Colonel Boyd in direct command of the troops, consisted of the nine companies of regulars which Boyd had brought from Pittsburg, six companies of infantry of the Indiana militia, two companies of Indiana dragoons, two companies of Kentucky mounted rifles, a company of Indiana mounted rifles, and a com-

pany of scouts—about eleven hundred men in all. Their uniforms would have looked strange and outlandish indeed to one accustomed to the serviceable, dust-colored garb of the present-day soldier, for the infantry wore high felt hats of the "stovepipe" pattern, adorned with red-white-and-blue cockades, tight-waisted, long-tailed coats of blue cloth with brass buttons, and pantaloons as nearly skin-tight as the tailor could make them. The dragoons were gorgeous in white buckskin breeches, high, varnished boots, "shell" jackets which reached barely to the hips, and brass helmets with streaming plumes of horsehair. Because the mounted riflemen who were under the command of Captain Spencer wore gray uniforms lavishly trimmed with yellow, they bore the nickname among the troops of "Spencer's Yellow-Jackets." The only men of the force, indeed, who were suitably clad for Indian warfare were the scouts, who wore the hunting-shirts, leggings, and moccasins of soft-tanned buckskin, which were the orthodox dress of the frontier.

Commanded by men of such wide experience in savage warfare as Harrison and Boyd, it is needless to say that every precaution was taken against surprise, the column moving in a formation which prepared it for instant battle. The cavalry formed advance and rear guards, and small detachments rode on either flank; the infantry marched in two columns, one on either side of the trail, with the baggage-wagons, pack-animals, and beeves between them, while the scouts, thrown far out into the forest, formed a moving cordon of skirmishers. After crossing the Vermilion River the troops found themselves upon an immense prairie, which stretched away, level as a floor, as far as the eye could

see—as far as the Illinois at Fort Dearborn, the guides asserted. It filled the soldiers, who came from a rugged and heavily forested country, with the greatest astonishment, for few of them had ever seen so vast an expanse of level ground before. Shortly afterward, however, they left the prairie and marched through open woods, over ground gashed and furrowed by deep ravines. Here the greatest precautions had to be observed, for clouds of Indian scouts hung upon the flanks of the column, and the broken nature of the country fitted it admirably for ambushes.

Late in the afternoon of November 6, 1811, in a cold and drizzling rain, Harrison gave orders to bivouac for the night on a piece of high but swamp-surrounded ground on the banks of the Tippecanoe River, near its junction with the Wabash, and barely five miles from Prophet's Town. It was a triangular-shaped knoll, dotted with oaks, one side of which dropped down in a sharp declivity to a little stream edged with willows and heavy underbrush, while the other two sides sloped down more gradually to a marshy prairie. The camp was arranged in the form of an irregular parallelogram, with the regulars—who were the only seasoned troops in the expedition—forming the front and rear, the flanks being composed of mounted riflemen supported by militia, while two troops of dragoons were held in reserve. In the centre of this armed enclosure were parked the pack-animals and the baggage-train. Though late in the night the moon rose from behind a bank of clouds, the night was very dark, with occasional flurries of rain. The troops lay on the rain-soaked ground with rifles loaded and bayonets fixed, but they slept but little, I fancy, for they had brought no tents, few of them were

provided with blankets, and top-hats and tail-coats are not exactly adapted to camping in the forest in November.

From his experience in previous campaigns, Harrison had learned that, while in the vicinity of any considerable body of Indians, it was the part of precaution to arouse his men quietly an hour or so before daybreak, for it was a characteristic of the Indians to deliver their attacks shortly before the dawn, which is the hour when tired men sleep the soundest. Meanwhile, in the Indian camp preparations were being stealthily made for the surprise and extermination of the white invaders.

Tecumseh was not present, being absent on one of his proselyting tours among the southern tribes, but the Prophet brought out the sacred torch and the magic beans, which his followers had only to touch, so he assured them, to become invulnerable to the enemy's bullets. This ceremony was followed by a series of incantations, war songs, and dances, until the Indians, now wrought up to a frenzy, were ready for any deed of madness. Slipping like horrid phantoms through the waist-high prairie grass in the blackness of the night, they crept nearer and nearer to the sleeping camp, intending to surround the position, stab the sentries, rush the camp, and slaughter every man in it whom they could not take alive for the torture stake.

In pursuance of his custom of early rising, Harrison was just pulling on his boots before the embers of a dying camp-fire, at four o'clock in the morning, preparatory to rousing his men, when the silence of the forest was suddenly broken by the crack of a sentry's rifle. The echoes had not time to die away before, from three sides of the camp, rose the shrill, hair-raising war-whoop

of the Indians. As familiar with the lay of the land as a housewife is with the arrangements of her kitchen, they had effected their plan of surrounding the camp, confident of taking the suddenly awakened soldiers so completely by surprise that they would be unable to offer an effectual resistance. Not a warrior of them but did not look forward to returning to Prophet's Town with a string of dripping scalp-locks at his waist.

The Indians, quite unlike their usual custom of keeping to cover, fought as white men fight, for, made reckless by the prophet's assurances that his spells had made them invulnerable and that bullets could not harm them, they advanced across the open at a run. At sight of the oncoming wave of bedaubed and befeathered figures the raw levies from Indiana and Kentucky visibly wavered and threatened to give way, but Boyd's regulars, though taken by surprise, showed the result of their training by standing like a stone wall against the onset of the whooping redskins. The engagement quickly became general. The chorus of cheers and yells and groans and war-whoops was punctuated by the continuous crackle of the frontiersmen's rifles and the crashing volleys of the infantry. Harrison, a conspicuous figure on a white horse and wearing a white blanket coat, rode up and down the lines, encouraging here, cautioning there, as cool and as quiet-voiced as though back on the parade-ground at Vincennes.

The pressure was greatest at the angle of the camp where the first attack was made, the troops stationed at this point having the greatest difficulty in holding their position. Seeing this, Major Joseph H. Daviess, a brilliant but hot-headed young Kentuckian who had achieved fame by his relentless attacks on Aaron Burr,

twice asked permission to charge with his dragoons, and twice the governor sent back the answer: "Tell Major Daviess to be patient; he shall have his chance before the battle is over." When Daviess for a third time urged his importunate request, Harrison answered the messenger sharply: "Tell Major Daviess he has twice heard my opinion; he may now use his own discretion." Discretion, however, was evidently not included in the Kentuckian's make-up, for no sooner had he received Harrison's message than, with barely a score of dismounted troopers, he charged the Indian line. So foolhardy a performance could only be expected to end in disaster. Daviess fell, mortally wounded, and his men, such of them as were not dead, turned and fled for their lives.

The Prophet, who had been chanting appeals to the Great Spirit from the top of a rock within view of his warriors but safely out of range of the American rifles (he evidently had some doubts as to the efficacy of his charms), realized that, as a result of the unforeseen obstinacy of the Americans' resistance, victory was fast slipping from his grasp and that his only hope of success lay in an overwhelming charge. Roused to renewed fanaticism by his fervid exhortations, the Indians once again swept forward, whooping like madmen.

But the Americans were ready for them, and as the yelling redskins came within range they met them with a volley of buckshot which left them wavering, undecided whether to come on or to retreat. Harrison, whose plan was to maintain his lines unbroken until daylight and then make a general advance, and who had been constantly riding from point to point within the camp to keep the assailed positions reinforced, realized that the

crucial moment had arrived. Now was his chance to drive home the deciding blow. Boyd, recognizing as quickly as Harrison the opportunity thus presented, ordered a bugler to sound the charge, and his infantry roared down upon the Indian line in a human avalanche tipped with steel. At the same moment he ordered up the two squadrons of dragoons which he had been holding in reserve. "Column right into line!" he roared, in the voice which had resounded over so many fields in far-off Hindustan. "Trot! Gallop! *Charge!* Hip, hip, here we go!" The Indians, panic-stricken at the sight of the oncoming troopers in their brass helmets and streaming plumes of horsehair, broke and ran.

Tippecanoe was won, though at a cost to the Americans of nearly two hundred killed and wounded, including two lieutenant-colonels, two majors, five captains, and several lieutenants. The discredited Prophet, now become an object of hatred and derision among his own people, fled for his life while the victorious Americans burned his town behind him. Tecumseh, returning from the south to be greeted by the news of the disaster to his plans resulting from his brother's folly, threw in his lot with the British, commanded England's Indian allies in the War of 1812, and died two years later at the battle of the Thames, when his old adversary, Harrison, once again led the Americans to victory. For his share in the Tippecanoe triumph, Boyd received a brigadier-general's commission. Harrison was started on the road which was to end at the White House. The peril of the great Indian confederation was ended forever, and the civilization of the West was advanced a quarter of a century.

THE PIRATE WHO TURNED PATRIOT

It is not flattering for us to have to admit that we are greatly indebted to a pirate for the success of the Americans against the British attack on New Orleans in 1814. Such is the case, however. And we shall have to make concessions to our pride by recalling the old adage that there is some good in every one. This will be rather easy for us to do in the instance of Jean Lafitte. Lafitte was not the leering, heartless, walk-the-plank type of pirate that had infested the Spanish Main in the days of the treasure-laden ships. He was rather a gentleman pirate, preying upon the illicit slave-smugglers—one lawless element operating upon another. However, one deed makes Jean Lafitte of heroic mold. When Andrew Jackson was organizing his motley army to repel the British, Lafitte placed patriotism above all other considerations, and offered his own cannon and the services of his expert marksmen in defense of a state which had set a price on his head.

THE PIRATE WHO TURNED PATRIOT

How many well-informed people are aware, I wonder, that the fact that the American flag, and not the British, flies to-day over the Mississippi Valley is largely due to the eleventh-hour patriotism of a pirate? Of the many kinds of men of many nationalities who have played parts of greater or less importance in the making of our national history, none is more completely cloaked in mystery, romance, and adventure than Jean Lafitte. The last of that long line of buccaneers who for more than two centuries terrorized the waters and ravaged the coasts of the Gulf of Mexico, his exploits make the wildest fiction appear commonplace and tame. Although he was as thoroughgoing a pirate as ever plundered an honest merchantman, I do not mean to imply that he was a leering, low-browed scoundrel, with a red bandanna twisted about his head and an armory of assorted weapons at his waist, for he was nothing of the sort. On the contrary, from all I can learn about him, he appears to have been a very gentlemanly sort of person indeed, tall and graceful and soft-voiced, and having the most charming manners. Though he regarded the law with unconcealed contempt, there came a crisis in our national history when he placed patriotism above all other considerations, and rendered an inestimable service to the country whose laws he had flouted and to the State which had set a price on his head. Indeed, we are indebted to Jean Lafitte in scarcely less measure than we are to Andrew Jackson for frustrating the British invasion and conquest of Louisiana.

Though the palmy days of piracy in the Gulf of Mexico really ended with the seventeenth century, by which time the rich cities of Middle America had been impoverished by repeated sackings and the gold-freighted caravels had taken to travelling under convoy, even at the beginning of the nineteenth century these storied waters still offered many opportunities to lawless and enterprising sea-folk. But the pirates of the nineteenth century, unlike their forerunners of the seventeenth, preyed on slave-ships rather than on treasure-galleons. Consider the facts. On January 1, 1808, Congress passed an act prohibiting the further importation of slaves into the United States. By this act the recently acquired territory of Louisiana, over which prosperity was advancing in three-league boots, was deprived of its supply of labor. With crops rotting in the fields for lack of laborers, the price of slaves rose until a negro fresh from the coast of Africa would readily bring a thousand dollars at auction in New Orleans. At the same time, remember, ship-loads of slaves were being brought to Cuba, where no such restrictions existed, and sold for three hundred dollars a head. Under such conditions smuggling was inevitable.

At first the smugglers bought their slaves in the Cuban market, and running them across the Gulf of Mexico, landed them at obscure harbors on the Louisiana coast, whence they were marched overland to New Orleans and Baton Rouge. The smugglers soon saw, however, that the slavers carried small crews, poorly armed, and quickly made up their minds that it was a shameful waste of money to buy slaves when they could get them for nothing by the menace of their guns. In short, the smugglers became buccaneers, and as such drove a thriv-

ing business in captured cargoes of "black ivory," as the slaves were euphemistically called.

As the demand was greatest on the rich new lands along the Mississippi, it was at New Orleans that the buccaneers found the most profitable market for their human wares, for they could easily sail up the river to the city, dispose of their cargoes, and be off again with the quick despatch of regular liners to resume their depredations. But the buccaneers did not confine their attention to slave-ships, so that in a short time, despite the efforts of British, French, and American war-ships, the waters of the Gulf became as unsafe for all kinds of merchant vessels as they were in the days of Morgan and Kidd.

As a base for their piratical and smuggling operations, as well as for supplies and repairs, the buccaneers chose Barataria Bay, a place which met their requirements as though made to order. The name is applied to all of the Gulf coast of Louisiana between the mouth of the Mississippi and the mouth of another considerable stream known as the Bayou La Fourche, the latter a waterway to a rich and populous region. The Bay of Barataria is screened from the Gulf, with which it is connected by a deep-water pass, by the island of Grande Terre, the trees on which were high enough to effectually hide the masts of the buccaneers' vessels from the view of inquisitive war-ships cruising outside. Between the Mississippi and La Fourche there is a perfect network of small but navigable waterways which extend almost to New Orleans, so that the buccaneers thus had a back-stairs route, as it were, to the city, which brought their rendezvous at Grande Terre within safe and easy reach of the great mart of the Mississippi Valley.

Such supplies as the buccaneers did not get from the ships they captured, they obtained by purchase in New Orleans. For the chains which were used in making up the caufles of slaves for transportation into the interior, they were accustomed to patronize the blacksmith-shop of the Brothers Lafitte, which stood—and still stands—on the northeast corner of Bourbon and St. Philippe Streets. Of the history of these brothers prior to their arrival in New Orleans nothing is definitely known. From their names, and because they spoke with the accent peculiar to the Garonne, they are credited with having been natives of the south of France, though whence they came and where they went are questions which have never been satisfactorily answered. They were quite evidently men of means, and might have been described as gentlemen blacksmiths, for they owned the slaves who pounded the iron. Being men of exceptional business shrewdness, it is not to be wondered at that from doing the buccaneers' blacksmithing they gradually became their agents and bankers, the smithy in St. Philippe Street coming in time to be a sort of clearing-house for many questionable transactions.

Now Jean Lafitte was an extremely able man, combining a remarkable executive ability with a genius for organization. Through success in managing their affairs, he gradually increased his usefulness to the buccaneers until he obtained complete control over them, and ruled them as despotically as a tribal chieftain. This was when his genius for organization had succeeded in uniting their different, and often rival, efforts and interests into a sort of pirates' corporation, composed of all the buccaneers, privateers, and freebooters doing business in the Gulf, this combination of outlaws, in-

credible as it may seem, effectually controlling the price of slaves and many other things in the Mississippi Valley.

The influence of this new element in the buccaneer business soon made itself felt. At that time New Orleans was a sort of cross between an American frontier town and a West Indian port, its streets and barrooms being filled with swaggering adventurers, gamblers, and soldiers of fortune from every corner of the three Americas, the presence of most of whom was due to the activity of the sheriffs in their former homes. It was from these men, cool, reckless, resourceful, that Lafitte recruited his forces.

Leaving his brother Pierre in charge of the New Orleans branch of the enterprise, Jean Lafitte took up his residence on Grande Terre, where, under his directions, a fort was built, around which there soon sprang up a veritable city of thatched huts for the shelter of the buccaneers, and for the accommodation of the merchants who came to supply their wants or to purchase their captured cargoes. Within a year upward of a dozen armed vessels rendezvoused in Barataria Bay, and their crews addressed Jean Lafitte as "*bosse.*" One of the Baratarians, a buccaneer of the walk-the-plank-and-scuttle-the-ship school named Grambo, who boldly called himself a pirate, and jeered at Lafitte's polite euphemism of privateer, was one day unwise enough to dispute the new authority. Without an instant's hesitation Lafitte drew a pistol and shot him through the heart in the presence of the whole band. After that episode there was no more insubordination.

By 1813 the Baratarians, who had long since extended their operations to include all kinds of merchandise,

were driving such a roaring trade that the commerce and shipping of New Orleans was seriously diminished (for why go to New Orleans for their supplies, the sea-captains and the plantation-owners argued, when they could get what they wanted at Barataria for a fraction of the price), the business of the banks decreased alarmingly under the continual lessening of their deposits, while even the national government began to feel its loss of revenue. The waters of Barataria, on the contrary, were alive with the sails of incoming and outgoing vessels; the wharfs which had been constructed at Grande Terre resounded to the creak of winches and the shouts of stevedores unloading contraband cargoes, and the long, low warehouses were filled with merchandise and the log stockades with slaves waiting to be sold and transported to the up-country plantations. So defiant of the law did Lafitte become that the streets of New Orleans were placarded with handbills announcing the auction sales at Barataria of captured cargoes, and to them flocked bargain-hunters from all that part of the South. An idea of the business done by the buccaneers at this time may be gained from an official statement that four hundred slaves were sold by auction in the Grande Terre market in a single day.

Of course the authorities took action in the matter, but their efforts to enforce the law proved both dangerous and ineffective. In October, 1811, a customs inspector succeeded in surprising a band of Baratarians and seizing some merchandise they had with them, but before he could convey the prisoners and the captured contraband to New Orleans Lafitte and a party of his men overtook him, rescued the prisoners, recovered the property, and in the fight which ensued wounded several

of the posse. Some months later Lafitte killed an inspector named Stout, who attempted to interfere with him, and wounded two of his deputies.

Then Governor Claiborne issued a proclamation offering a reward for the capture of Lafitte dead or alive, at the same time appealing to the legislature for permission to raise an armed force to break up the buccaneering business for good and all. The cautious legislators declined to take any action, however, because they were unwilling to interfere with an enterprise that, however illegal it might be, was unquestionably developing the resources of lower Louisiana, and incidentally adding immensely to the fortunes of their constituents. As for the Baratarians, they paid as scant attention to the governor's proclamation as though it had never been written. Surrounded by groups of admiring friends, Lafitte and his lieutenants continued to swagger through the streets of New Orleans; his men openly boasted of their exploits in every barroom of the city, and in places of public resort announcements of auctions at Barataria continued to be displayed.

Now, it should be understood that the feebleness which characterized all the attempts of the federal government to break the power of the buccaneers was not due to any reluctance to prosecute them, but to the fact that it already had its attention taken up with far more pressing matters, for we were then in the midst of our second war with Great Britain. The long series of injuries which England had inflicted on the United States, such as the plundering and confiscation of our ships, the impressment into the British navy of our seamen, and the interruption of our commerce with other nations, had culminated on June 18, 1812, by Congress

declaring war. So unexpected was this action that it found the country totally unprepared. Our military establishment was barely large enough to provide garrisons for the most exposed points on our far-flung borders; the numerous ports on our seaboard were left unprotected and unfortified; and our navy consisted of but a handful of war-ships. The history of the first two years of the struggle, which was marked by brilliant American victories at sea, but by a disastrous attempt to invade Canada, has, however, no place in this narrative.

Early in the summer of 1814, the British Government, exasperated by its failure to inflict any vital damage in the Northern States, determined to bring the war to a quick conclusion by the invasion and conquest of Louisiana. The preparations made for this expedition were in themselves startling. Indeed, few Americans have even a faint conception of the strength of the blow which England prepared to deal us, for with Napoleon's abdication and exile to Elba, and the ending of the war with France, she was enabled to bring her whole military and naval power against us. The British armada consisted of fifty war-ships, mounting more than a thousand guns. It was commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, under whom was Sir Thomas Hardy, the friend of Nelson, Rear-Admiral Malcolm, and Rear-Admiral Codrington, and was manned by the same sailors who had fought so valorously at the Nile and at Trafalgar.

This great fleet acted as convoy for an almost equal number of transports, having on board eight thousand soldiers, which were the very flower of the British army, nearly all of them being veterans of the Napole-

onic wars. Such importance did the British Government attach to the success of this expedition that it seriously considered giving the command of it to no less a personage than the Duke of Wellington. So certain were the British that the venture would be successful that they brought with them a complete set of civil officials to conduct the government of this new country which was about to be annexed to his Majesty's dominions, judges, customs inspectors, revenue-collectors, court-criers, printers, and clerks, together with printing-presses and office paraphernalia, being embarked on board the transports. A large number of ladies, wives and relatives of the officers, also accompanied the expedition, to take part in the festivities which were planned to celebrate the capture of New Orleans. And, as though to cap this exhibition of audacity, a number of ships were chartered by British speculators to bring home the booty, the value of which was estimated beforehand at fourteen millions of dollars. Whether the British Government expected to be able to permanently hold Louisiana is extremely doubtful, for it must have been fully aware that the Western States were capable of pouring down a hundred thousand men, if necessary, to repel an invasion. It is probable, therefore, that they counted only on a temporary occupation, which they expected to prolong sufficiently, however, to give them time to pillage and lay waste the country, a course which they felt confident would quickly bring the government at Washington to terms.

This formidable armada set sail from England early in the summer of 1814 and, reaching the Gulf of Mexico, established its base of operations, regardless of all the laws of neutrality, at the Spanish port of Pensacola.

One morning in the following September a British brig hove to off Grande Terre, and called attention to her presence by firing a cannon. Lafitte, darting through the pass in his four-oared barge to reconnoitre, met the ship's gig with three scarlet-coated officers in the stern, who introduced themselves as bearers of important despatches for Mr. Lafitte. The pirate chief, introducing himself in turn, invited his unexpected guests ashore, and led the way to his quarters with that extraordinary charm of manner for which he was noted even among the punctilious Creoles of New Orleans.

After a dinner of Southern delicacies, which elicited exclamations even from the blasé British officers, Lafitte opened the despatches. They were addressed to Jean Lafitte, Esquire, commandant at Barataria, from the commander-in-chief of the British forces at Pensacola, and bluntly offered him thirty thousand dollars, payable in Pensacola or New Orleans, a commission as captain in the British navy, and the enlistment of his men in the naval or military forces of Great Britain if he would assist the British in their impending invasion of Louisiana. Though it was a generous offer, no one knew better than the British commander that Lafitte's co-operation was well worth the price, for, familiar with the network of streams and navigable swamps lying between Barataria Bay and New Orleans, he was capable of guiding a British expedition through these secret waterways to the very gates of the city before the Americans would have a hint of its approach. It is not too much to assert that at this juncture the future of New Orleans, and indeed of the whole Mississippi Valley, hung upon the decision of Jean Lafitte, a pirate and fugitive from justice with a price upon his head.

Whether Lafitte seriously considered accepting the offer there is, of course, no way of knowing. That it must have sorely tempted him it seems but reasonable to suppose, for he was not an American, either by birth or naturalization, and the prospect of exchanging his hazardous outlaw's life, with a vision of the gallows ever looming before him, for a captain's commission in the royal navy, with all that that implied, could hardly have failed to appeal to him strongly. That he promptly decided to reject the offer speaks volumes for the man's strength of character and for his faith in American institutions. Appreciating that at such a crisis every hour gained was of value to the Americans, he asked time to consider the proposal, requesting the British officers to await him while he consulted an old friend and associate whose vessel, he said, was then lying in the bay.

Scarcely was he out of sight, however, before a band of buccaneers, acting, of course, under his orders, seized the officers and hustled them into the interior of the island, where they were politely but forcibly detained. Here they were found some days later by Lafitte, who pretended to be highly indignant at such unwarrantable treatment of his guests. Releasing them with profuse apologies, he saw them safely aboard their brig, and assured them that he would shortly communicate his decision to the British commander. But that officer's letter was already in the hands of a friend of Lafitte's in New Orleans, who was a member of the legislature, and accompanying it was a communication from the pirate chief himself, couched in those altruistic and patriotic phrases for which the rascal was famous. In it he asserted that, though he admitted being guilty of having evaded the payment of certain customs duties,

he had never lost his loyalty and affection for the United States, and that, notwithstanding the fact that there was a price on his head, he would never miss an opportunity of serving his adopted country. A few days later Lafitte forwarded through the same channels much valuable information which his agents had gathered as to the strength, resources, and plans of the British expedition, enclosing with it a letter addressed to Governor Claiborne in which he offered the services of himself and his men in defense of the State and city on condition that they were granted a pardon for past offenses.

Receiving no reply to this communication Lafitte sailed up the river to New Orleans in his lugger and made his way to the residence of the governor. Governor Claiborne was seated at his desk, immersed in the business of his office, when the door was softly opened, and Lafitte, stepping inside, closed it behind him. Clad in the full-skirted, bottle-green coat, the skin-tight breeches of white leather, and the polished Hessian boots which he affected, he presented a most graceful and gallant figure. As he entered he drew two pistols from his pockets, cocked them, and covered the startled governor, after which ominous preliminaries he bowed with the grace for which he was noted.

"Sir," he remarked pleasantly, "you may possibly have heard of me. My name is Jean Lafitte."

"What the devil do you mean, sir," exploded the governor, "by showing yourself here? Don't you know that I shall call the sentry and have you arrested?"

"Pardon me, your Excellency," interrupted Lafitte, moving his weapons significantly, "but you will do nothing of the sort. If you move your hand any nearer that bell I shall be compelled to shoot you through the

shoulder, a necessity, believe me, which I should deeply regret. I have called on you because I have something important to say to you, and I intend that you shall hear it. To begin with, you have seen fit to put a price upon my head?"

"Upon the head of a pirate, yes," thundered the governor, now almost apoplectic with rage.

"In spite of that fact," continued Lafitte, "I have rejected a most flattering offer from the British Government, and have come here, at some small peril to myself, to renew in person the offer of my services in repelling the coming invasion. I have at my command a body of brave, well-armed, and highly disciplined men who have been trained to fight. Does the State care to accept their services or does it not?"

The governor, folding his arms, looked long at Lafitte before he answered. Then he held out his hand. "It is a generous offer that you make, sir. I accept it with pleasure."

"At daybreak to-morrow, then," said Lafitte, replacing his pistols, "my men will be awaiting your Excellency's orders across the river." Then, with another sweeping bow, he left the room as silently as he had entered it.

Governor Claiborne immediately communicated Lafitte's offer to General Andrew Jackson, then at Mobile, who had been designated by the War Department to conduct the defense of Louisiana. Jackson, who had already issued a proclamation denouncing the British for their overtures to "robbers, pirates, and bandits," as he termed the Baratarians, promptly replied that the only thing he would have to do with Lafitte was to hang him. Nevertheless, when the general arrived in New Orleans a few days later, Lafitte called at his head-

quarters and requested an interview. By this time Jackson was conscious of the feebleness of the resources at his disposal for the defense of the city and of the strength of the armament directed against it, which accounts, perhaps, for his consenting to receive the "bandit." Lafitte, looking the grim soldier squarely in the eye, repeated his offer, and so impressed was Jackson with the pirate's cool and fearless bearing that he accepted his services.

On the 10th of December, 1814, ten days after Jackson's arrival in New Orleans, the British armada reached the mouth of the Mississippi. Small wonder that the news almost created a panic in the city, for the very names of the ships and regiments composing the expedition had become famous through their exploits in the Napoleonic wars. It was a nondescript and motley force which Jackson had hastily gathered to repel this imposing army of invasion. Every man capable of bearing arms in New Orleans and its vicinity—planters, merchants, bankers, lawyers—had volunteered for service. To the local company of colored freedmen was added another one composed of negro refugees from Santo Domingo, men who had sided with the whites in the revolution there and had had to leave the island in consequence. Even the prisoners in the calaboose had been released and provided with arms.

From the parishes round about came Creole volunteers by the hundred, clad in all manner of clothing and bearing all kinds of weapons. From Mississippi came a troop of cavalry under Hinds, which was followed a few hours later by Coffee's famous brigade of "Dirty Shirts," composed of frontiersmen from the forests of Kentucky and Tennessee, who after a journey of eight

hundred miles through the wilderness answered Jackson's message to hurry by covering the one hundred and fifty miles between Baton Rouge and New Orleans in two days. Added to these were a thousand raw militiamen, who had been brought down on barges and flat-boats from the towns along the upper river, four companies of regulars, Beale's brigade of riflemen, a hundred Choctaw Indians in war-paint and feathers, and last, but in many respects the most efficient of all, the corps of buccaneers from Barataria, under the command of the Lafittes. The men, dragging with them cannon taken from their vessels, were divided into two companies, one under Captain Beluche (who rose in after years to be admiral-in-chief of Venezuela) and the other under a veteran privateersman named Dominique You. These men were fighters by profession, hardy, seasoned, and cool-headed, and as they swung through the streets of New Orleans to take up the position which Jackson had assigned them, even that taciturn old soldier gave a grunt of approbation.

Jackson had chosen as his line of defence an artificial waterway known as the Rodriguez Canal, which lay some five miles to the east of the city, and along its embankments, which in themselves formed pretty good fortifications, he distributed his men. On the night of December 23 a force of two thousand British succeeded, by means of boats, in making their way, through the chain of bayous which surrounds the city, to within a mile or two of Jackson's lines, where they camped for the night. Being informed of their approach (for the British, remember, had the whole countryside against them), Jackson, knowing the demoralizing effect of a night attack, directed Coffee and his Tennesseans to

throw themselves upon the British right, while at the same moment Beale's Kentuckians attacked on the left. Trained in all the wiles of Indian warfare, the frontiersmen succeeded in reaching the outskirts of the British camp before they were challenged by the sentries. Their reply was a volley at close quarters and a charge with the tomahawk—for they had no bayonets—which drove the British force back in something closely akin to a rout.

Meanwhile Jackson had set his other troops at work strengthening their line of fortifications, so that when the sun rose on the morning of the day before Christmas it found them strongly intrenched behind earthworks helped out with timber, sand bags, fence-rails, and cotton bales—whence arose the myth that the Americans fought behind bales of cotton. The British troops were far from being in Christmas spirits, for the truth had already begun to dawn upon them that men can fight as well in buckskin shirts as in scarlet tunics, and that these raw-boned wilderness hunters, with their powder-horns and abnormally long rifles, were likely to prove more formidable enemies than the imposing grenadiers of Napoleon's Old Guard, whom they had been fighting in Spain and France. On that same day before Christmas, strangely enough, a treaty of peace was being signed by the envoys of the two nations in a little Belgian town, four thousand miles away.

On Christmas Day, however, the wonted confidence of the British soldiery was somewhat restored by the arrival of Sir Edward Pakenham, the new commander-in-chief, for even in that hard-fighting day there were few European soldiers who bore more brilliant reputations. A brother-in-law of the Duke of Wellington, he

had fought side by side with him through the Peninsular War; he had headed the storming party at Badajoz; and at Salamanca had led the charge which won the day for England and a knighthood for himself. An earldom and the governorship of Louisiana, it was said, had been promised him as his reward for the American expedition.

Pakenham's practised eye quickly appreciated the strength of the American position, which, after a council of war, it was decided to carry by storm. During the night of the 26th the storming columns, eight thousand strong, took up their positions within half a mile of the American lines. As the sun rose next morning over fields sparkling with frost, the bugles sounded the advance, and the British army, ablaze with color, and in as perfect alignment as though on parade, moved forward to the attack. As they came within range of the American guns, a group of plantation buildings which masked Jackson's front were blown up, and the British were startled to find themselves confronted by a row of ship's cannon, manned as guns are seldom manned on land. Around each gun was clustered a crew of lean, fierce-faced, red-shirted ruffians, caked with sweat and mud: they were Lafitte's buccaneers, who had responded to Jackson's orders by running in all the way from their station on the Bayou St. John that morning. Not until he could make out the brass buttons on the tunics of the advancing British did Lafitte give the command to fire. Then the artillery of the pirate-patriots flashed and thundered. Before that deadly fire the scarlet columns crumbled as plaster crumbles beneath a hammer, the men dropping, first by twos and threes, then by dozens and scores. In five minutes the attacking columns, composed of regiments which

were the boast of the British army, had been compelled to sullenly retreat.

The British commander, appreciating that the repulse of his forces was largely due to the fire of the Baratarian artillery, gave orders that guns be brought from the fleet and mounted in a position where they could silence the fire of the buccaneers. Three days were consumed in the herculean task of moving the heavy pieces of ordnance into position, but when the sun rose on New Year's morning it showed a skilfully constructed line of intrenchments, running parallel to the American front and armed with thirty heavy guns. While the British were thus occupied, the Americans had not been idle, for Jackson had likewise busied himself in constructing additional batteries, while Commodore Patterson, the American naval commander, had gone through the sailors' boarding-houses of New Orleans with a fine-tooth comb, impressing every nautical-looking character on which he could lay his hands, regardless of nationality, color, or excuses, to serve the guns.

With their storming columns sheltered behind the breastworks, awaiting the moment when they would burst through the breach which they confidently expected would shortly be made in the American defences, the British batteries opened fire with a crash which seemed to split the heavens. Throughout the artillery duel which ensued splendid service was rendered by the men under Lafitte, who trained their guns as carefully and served them as coolly as though they were back again on the decks of their privateers. The storming parties, which were waiting for a breach to be made, waited in vain, for within an hour and thirty minutes after the

action opened the British batteries were silenced, their guns dismounted, and their parapets levelled with the plain. The veterans of Wellington and Nelson had been outfought from first to last by a band of buccaneers, reinforced by a few score American bluejackets and a handful of nondescript seamen.

Pakenham had one more plan for the capture of the city. This was a general assault by his entire army on the American lines. His plan of attack was simple, and would very probably have proved successful against troops less accustomed to frontier warfare than the Americans. Colonel Thornton, with fourteen hundred men, was directed to cross the river during the night of January 7, and, creeping up to the American lines under cover of the darkness, to carry them by assault. His attack was to be the signal for a column under General Gibbs to storm Jackson's right, and for another, under General Keane, to throw itself against the American left, General Lambert, who had just arrived with two fresh regiments, being held in reserve. So carefully had the British commanders perfected their plans that the battle was already won—in theory.

No one knew better than Jackson that this was to be the deciding round of the contest, and he accordingly made his preparations to win it. He also had received a reinforcement, for the long-expected militia from Kentucky, two thousand two hundred strong, had just arrived, after a forced march of fifteen hundred miles, though in a half-naked and starving condition. Our history contains nothing finer, to my way of thinking, than the story of how these mountaineers of the Blue Ridge, footsore, ragged, and hungry, came pouring down from the north to repel the threatened invasion.

The Americans, who numbered, all told, barely four thousand men, were scattered along a front of nearly three miles, one end of the line extending so far into a swamp that the soldiers stood in water to their waists during the day, and at night slept on floating logs made fast to trees.

Long before daybreak on the morning of the 8th of January the divisions of Gibbs and Keane were in position, and waiting impatiently for the outburst of musketry which would be the signal that Thornton had begun his attack. Thornton had troubles of his own, however, for the swift current of the Mississippi, as though wishing to do its share in the nation's defence, had carried his boats a mile and a half down-stream, so that it was daylight before he was able to effect a landing, when a surprise was, of course, out of the question. But Pakenham, naturally obstinate and now made wholly reckless by the miscarriage of his plans, refused to recall his orders; so, as the gray mists of the early morning slowly lifted, his columns were seen advancing across the fields.

"Steady now, boys! Steady!" called Jackson, as he rode up and down behind his lines. "Don't waste your ammunition, for we've none to spare. Pick your man, wait until he gets within range, and then let him have it! Let's get this business over with to-day!" His orders were obeyed to the letter, for not a shot was fired until the scarlet columns were within certain range. Then the order "Commence firing" was repeated down the line. Neither hurriedly, nor excitedly, nor confusedly was it obeyed, but with the utmost calmness and deliberation, the frontiersmen, trained to use the rifle from boyhood, choosing their targets, and calculating their ranges as unconcernedly as though they were

hunting in their native forests. Still the British columns pressed indomitably on, and still the lean and lantern-jawed Jackson rode up and down his lines, cheering, cautioning, exhorting, directing. Suddenly he reined up his horse at the Baratarian battery commanded by Dominique You.

"What's this? What's this?" he exclaimed. "You have stopped firing? What the devil does this mean, sir?"

"Of course we've stopped firing, general," said the buccaneer, touching his forelock man-o'-war fashion. "The powder's good for nothing. It might do to shoot blackbirds with, but not redcoats."

Jackson beckoned to one of his aides-de-camp.

"Tell the ordnance officer that I will have him shot in five minutes as a traitor if Dominique complains again of his powder," and he galloped off. When he passed that way a few minutes later the rattle of the musketry was being punctuated at half-minute intervals with the crash of the Baratarian guns.

"Ha, friend Dominique," called Jackson, "I'm glad to see you're at work again."

"Pretty good work, too, general," responded the buccaneer. "It looks to me as if the British have discovered that there has been a change of powder in this battery."

He was right. Before the combined rifle and artillery fire of the Americans the British columns were melting like snow under a spring rain. Still their officers led them on, cheering, pleading, threatening, imploring. Pakenham's arm was pierced by a bullet; at the same instant another killed his horse, but, mounting the pony of his aide-de-camp, he continued to encourage his disheartened and wavering men. Keane was borne bleed-

ing from the field, and a moment later Gibbs, mortally wounded, was carried after him.

The panic which was just beginning to seize the British soldiery was completed at this critical instant by a shot from one of the Baratarians' big guns which burst squarely in the middle of the advancing column, causing terrible destruction in the solid ranks. Pakenham's horse fell dead, and the general reeled into the arms of an officer who sprang forward to catch him. Terribly wounded, he was carried to the shelter of a spreading oak, beneath which, five minutes later, he breathed his last. Then the ebb-tide began. The shattered regiments, demoralized by the death of their commander, and fearfully depleted by the American fire, broke and ran. Ten minutes later, save for the crawling, agonized wounded, not a living foe was to be seen. But the field, which had been green with grass half an hour before, was carpeted with scarlet now, and the carpet was made of British dead. Of the six thousand men who took part in the attack, it is estimated that two thousand six hundred were killed or wounded. Of the Ninety-third Regiment, which had gone into action nine hundred strong, only one hundred and thirty-nine men answered to the roll-call. The Americans had eight men killed and thirteen wounded. The battle had lasted exactly twenty-five minutes. At eight o'clock the American bugles sounded "Cease firing," and Jackson—whom this victory was to make President of the United States—followed by his staff, rode slowly down the lines, stopping at each command to make a short address. As he passed, the regimental fifes and drums burst into "Hail, Columbia," and the rows of weary, powder-grimed men, putting their caps on the ends of

their long rifles, swung them in the air and cheered madly the victor of New Orleans.

There is little more to tell. On March 17 the British expedition, accompanied by the judges and customs-inspectors and revenue-collectors, and by the officers' wives who had come out to take part in the festivities which were to mark the conquest, set sail from the mouth of the Mississippi, reaching Europe just in time to participate in the Waterloo campaign. In the general orders issued by Jackson after the battle the highest praise was given to the Lafittes and their followers from Barataria, while the official despatches to Washington strongly urged that some recognition be made of the extraordinary services rendered by the erstwhile pirates.

A few weeks later the President granted a full pardon to the inhabitants of Barataria, his message concluding: "Offenders who have refused to become the associates of the enemy in war upon the most seducing terms of invitation, and who have aided to repel his hostile invasion of the territory of the United States, can no longer be considered as objects of punishment, but as objects of generous forgiveness." Taking advantage of this amnesty, the ex-pirates settled down to the peaceable lives of fishermen and market-gardeners, and their descendants dwell upon the shores of Barataria Bay to this day. As to the future movements of the brothers Lafitte, beyond the fact that they established themselves for a time at Galveston, whence they harassed Spanish commerce in the Gulf of Mexico, nothing definite is known. Leaving New Orleans soon after the battle, they sailed out of the Mississippi, and out of this story.

THE LAST FIGHT OF THE "GENERAL ARMSTRONG"

At the outbreak of the War of 1812 the American navy was pitifully small and in no condition to meet even a part of the great British fleet on the high seas. Our only means, therefore, of counteracting the blockade of our ports that appeared inevitable was for President Madison to commission individuals to fit out privateers to prey on British commerce. Over two hundred of them put to sea at the very beginning of the war. Manned by men who would dare anything for victory and a share in the huge profits from the captures, they were a constant menace to British commerce. The work of the privateers, together with the outstanding successes of Perry and MacDonough on the Lakes, and various single encounters on the Atlantic, went a long way toward establishing among the British a wholesome respect for our sea-fighters. This story gives the thrilling details of how one lone privateer defied a detachment of three British war-ships and so crippled it that the British squadron was delayed for ten days in joining the expedition against New Orleans. This delay enabled Jackson to prepare for an adequate defense, which led to the defeat of the British forces.

THE LAST FIGHT OF THE "GENERAL ARMSTRONG"

We leaned over the rail of the *Hamburg*, Colonel Roosevelt and I, and watched the olive hills of Fayal rise from the turquoise sea. Houses white as chalk began to peep from among the orange groves; what looked at first sight to be a yellow ribbon tossed carelessly upon the ground turned into a winding road; then we rounded a headland, and the U-shaped harbor, edged by a sleepy town and commanded by a crumbling fortress, lay before us.

"In there," said the ex-President, pointing eagerly as our anchor rumbled down, "was waged one of the most desperate sea-fights ever fought, and one of the least known; in there lies the wreck of the *General Armstrong*, the privateer that stood off twenty times her strength in British men and guns, and thereby saved Louisiana from invasion. It is a story that should make the thrills of patriotism run up and down the back of every right-thinking American."

Everything about her, from the carved and gilded figurehead, past the rakish, slanting masts to the slender stern, indicated the privateer. As she stood into the roadstead of Fayal late in the afternoon of September 26, 1814, black-hulled and white-sparred, carrying an amazing spread of snowy canvas, she made a picture that brought a grunt of approval even from the surly Azorian pilot. Hardly had the red-white-and-blue en-

sign showing her nationality fluttered to her peak before a harbor skiff bearing the American consul, Dabney, shot out from shore; for these were troublous times on the Atlantic, and letters from the States were few and far between. Rounding her stern, he read, with a thrill of pride, "*General Armstrong, New York.*"

The very name stood for romance, valor, hairbreadth escape. For of all the two-hundred-odd privateers that put out from American ports at the outbreak of the War of 1812 to prey on British commerce, none had won so high a place in the popular imagination as this trim-built, black-hulled schooner. Built for speed, and carrying a spread of canvas at which most skippers would have stood aghast, she was the fastest and best-handled privateer afloat, and had always been able to show her heels to the enemy on the rare occasions when the superior range of her seven guns had failed to pound him into submission, her list of captures having made rich men of her owners.

The story of her desperate encounter off the mouth of the Surinam River with the British sloop of war *Coquette*, with four times her weight in guns, had fired the popular imagination as had few other events of the war. Although her commander, Samuel Chester Reid, was not long past his thirtieth birthday, no more skilful navigator or daring fighter ever trod a quarter-deck, and his crew of ninety men—Down-East fishermen, old man-o'-war's men, Creole privateersmen who had fought under Lafitte, reckless adventurers of every sort and kind—would have warmed the heart of bluff old John Paul Jones himself.

Just as dusk was falling the officer on watch reported a sail in the offing, and Reid and the consul, hurrying

on deck, made out the British brig *Carnation*, of eighteen guns, with two other war-vessels in her wake: the thirty-eight-gun frigate *Rota*, and the *Plantagenet*, of seventy-four. Now, as the privateer lay in the innermost harbor, where a dead calm prevailed, while the three British ships were fast approaching before the brisk breeze which was blowing outside, Reid, who knew the line which marks foolhardiness from courage, appreciating that the chances of his being able to hoist anchor, make sail, and get out of the harbor before the British squadron arrived to block the entrance were almost infinitesimal, decided to stay where he was and trust to the neutrality of the port, a decision that was confirmed by the assurances of Consul Dabney that the British would not dare to attack a vessel lying in a friendly harbor. But therein the consul was mistaken.

The *Carnation*, learning the identity of the American vessel from the pilot, hauled close into the harbor, not letting go her anchor until she was within pistol-shot of the *General Armstrong*. Instantly a string of signal-flags fluttered from her mast, and the message was promptly acknowledged by her approaching consorts, which thereupon proceeded to stand off and on across the mouth of the harbor, thus barring any chance of the privateer making her escape. So great was the commotion which ensued on the *Carnation's* deck that Reid, becoming suspicious of the Englishman's good faith, warped his ship under the very guns of the Portuguese fort.

About eight o'clock, just as dark had fallen, Captain Reid saw four boats slip silently from the shadow of the *Carnation* and pull toward him with muffled oars. If anything more were needed to convince him of their

hostile intentions, the moon at that moment appeared from behind a cloud and was reflected by the scores of cutlasses and musket-barrels in all four of the approaching boats. As they came within hailing distance Reid swung himself into the shrouds.

"Boats there!" he shouted, making a trumpet of his hands. "Come no nearer! For your own safety I warn you!"

At his hail the boats halted, as though in indecision, and their commanders held a whispered consultation. Then, apparently deciding to take the risk, and hoping, no doubt, to catch the privateer unprepared, they gave the order: "Give way all!" The oars caught the water together, and the four boats, loaded to the gunwales with sailors and marines, came racing on.

"Let 'em have it, boys!" roared Reid, and at the word a stream of flame leaped from the dark side of the privateer and a torrent of grape swept the crowded boats, almost annihilating one of the crews and sending the others, crippled and bleeding, back to the shelter of their ship.

By this time the moon had fully risen, and showed the heights overlooking the harbor to be black with spectators, among whom were the Portuguese governor and his staff; but the castle, either from weakness or fear, showed no signs of resenting the outrageous breach of neutrality to which the port had been subjected. Angered and chagrined at their repulse, the British now threw all caution aside. The long-boats and gigs of all three ships were lowered, and into them were crowded nearly four hundred men, armed with muskets, pistols, and cutlasses. Reid, seeing that an attack was to be made in force, proceeded to warp his vessel still closer inshore,

mooring her stem and stern within a few rods of the castle. Moving two of the nine-pounders across the deck, and cutting ports for them in the bulwarks, he brought five guns, in addition to his famous "long tom," to bear on the enemy. With cannon double-shotted, boarding-nets triced up, and decks cleared for action, the crew of the *General Armstrong* lay down beside their guns to await the British attack.

It was not long in coming. Just as the bells of the old Portuguese cathedral boomed twelve a dozen boats, loaded to the water's edge with sailors and marines, whose burnished weapons were like so many mirrors under the rays of the moon, swung around a promontory behind which they had been forming and, with measured stroke of oars, came sweeping down upon the lone privateer. The decks of the *General Armstrong* were black and silent, but round each gun clustered its crew of half-naked gunners, and behind the bulwarks knelt a line of cool, grim riflemen, eyes sighting down their barrels, cheeks pressed close against the stocks. Up and down behind his men paced Reid, the skipper, cool as a winter's morning.

"Hold your fire until I give the word, boys," he cautioned quietly. "Wait till they get within range, and then teach 'em better manners."

Nearer and nearer came the shadowy line of boats, the oars rising and falling with the faultless rhythm which marks the veteran man-o'-war's man. On they came, and now the waiting Americans could make out the gilt-lettered hatbands of the bluejackets and the white cross-belts and the brass buttons on the tunics of the marines. A moment more and those on the *Armstrong's* deck could see, beneath the shadow of the

leather shakoes, the tense, white faces of the British boarders.

"Now, boys!" roared Captain Reid; "let 'em have it for the honor of the flag!" and from the side of the privateer leaped a blast of flame and lead, cannon and musketry crashing in chorus. Never were men taken more completely by surprise than were those British sailors, for they had expected that Reid, relying on the neutrality of the port, would be quite unprepared to resist them. But, though the American fire had caused terrible havoc in the crowded boats, with the bulldog courage for which the British sailors were justly famous, they kept indomitably on. "Give way! Give way all!" screamed the boy-coxswains, and in the face of a withering rifle-fire the sailors, recovering from their momentary panic, bent grimly to their oars. Through a perfect hail-storm of lead, right up to the side of the privateer, they swept. Six boats made fast to her quarter and six more to her bow. "Boarders up and away!" bellowed the officers, hacking desperately at the nettings with their swords, and firing their pistols point-blank into the faces they saw above them. The *Armstrong's* gunners, unable to depress the muzzles of their guns enough so that they could be brought to bear, lifted the solid shot and dropped them from the rail into the British boats, mangling their crews and crashing through their bottoms. From the shelter of the bulwarks the American riflemen fired and loaded and fired again, while the negro cook and his assistant played their part in the defense by pouring kettles of boiling water over the British who were attempting to scramble up the sides, sending them back into their boats again scalded and groaning.

There has been no fiercer struggle in all the annals of the sea. The Yankee gunners, some of them gray-haired men who had seen service with John Paul Jones in the *Bon Homme Richard*, changed from cannon-balls to grape, and from grape to bags of bullets, so that by the time the British boats drew alongside they were little more than floating shambles. The dark waters of the harbor were lighted up by spurts of flame from muskets and cannon; the high, shrill yell of the Yankee privateersmen rose above the deep-throated hurrahs of the English sailors; the air was filled with the shouts and oaths of the combatants. Urged on by their officers' cries of "No quarter! Give the Yankees no quarter!" the British division which had attacked the bow hacked its way through the nettings, and succeeded by sheer weight of numbers in getting a footing on the deck, all three of the American lieutenants being killed or disabled in the terrific hand-to-hand struggle that ensued.

At this critical juncture, when the Americans on the forecastle, their officers fallen and their guns dismounted, were being pressed slowly back by overwhelming numbers, Captain Reid, having repulsed the attack on the *Armstrong's* quarter, led the after division forward at a run, the privateersmen, though outnumbered five to one, driving the English overboard with the resistless fury of their onset. As the British boats attempted to withdraw into safety, they were raked again and again with showers of lead; two of them sank, two of them were captured by the Americans. Finally, with nearly three hundred of their men—three-quarters of the cutting-out force—dead or wounded, the British, now cowed and discouraged, pulled slowly and painfully out of range. Some of the most brilliant victories the

British navy has ever gained were far less dearly purchased.

At three in the morning Reid received a note from Consul Dabney asking him to come ashore. He then learned that the governor had sent a letter to the British commander asking him to desist from further hostilities, as several buildings in the town had been injured by the British fire and a number of the inhabitants wounded. To this request Captain Lloyd had rudely replied that he would have the Yankee privateer if he had to knock the town into a heap of ruins. Returning on board, Reid ordered the dead and wounded taken ashore, and told the crew to save their personal belongings.

At daybreak the *Carnation*, being of lighter draft than the other vessels, stood close in for a third attack, opening on the privateer with every gun she could bring to bear. But even in those days the fame of American gunners was as wide as the seas, and so well did the crew of the *General Armstrong* uphold their reputation that the *Carnation* was compelled to beat a demoralized retreat, with her rigging cut away, her foremast about to fall, and with several gaping holes between wind and water. But Reid, appreciating that there was absolutely no chance of escape, and recognizing that further resistance would entail an unnecessary sacrifice of his men's lives, by which nothing could be gained, ordered the crew to throw the nine-pounders which had rendered such valiant service overboard and to leave the ship. The veteran gunners, who were as much attached to their great black guns as a cavalryman is to his horse, obeyed the order with tears ploughing furrows down their powder-begrimed cheeks. Then Reid with his own hand trained the long tom down his vessel's hatchway, and

pulling the lanyard sent a charge of grape crashing through her hull, from which she at once began to sink. Ten minutes later, before a British crew could reach her side, the *General Armstrong* went to the bottom with her flag still defiantly flying.

Few battles have been fought in which the odds were so unequal, and in few battles have the relative losses been so astounding. The three British war-ships carried two thousand men and one hundred and thirty guns, and of the four hundred men who composed the boarding party they lost, according to their own accounts, nearly three hundred killed and wounded. Of the American crew of ninety men, two were killed and seven wounded. This little crew of privateersmen had, in other words, put out of action more than three times their own number of British, and had added one more laurel to our chaplet of triumphs on the sea.

The Americans had scarcely gained the shore before Captain Lloyd—who had been so severely wounded in the leg that amputation was necessary—sent a peremptory message to the governor demanding their surrender. But the men who could not be taken at sea were not the men to be captured on land. Retreating to the mountainous interior of the island, the Americans took possession of a thick-walled convent, over which they hoisted the Stars and Stripes, and from which they defied British and Portuguese alike to come and take them. No one tried.

All of the following day was spent by the British in burying their one hundred and twenty dead—you can see the white gravestones to-day if you will take the trouble to climb the hill behind the little town—but it took them a week to repair the damage caused by the

battle. And so deep was their chagrin and mortification that when two British ships put into Fayal a few days later, and were ordered to take home the wounded, they were forbidden to carry any news of the disaster back to England.

To Captain Reid and his little band of fighters is due in no small measure the credit of saving New Orleans from capture and Louisiana from invasion. Lloyd's squadron was a part of the expedition then gathering at Pensacola for the invasion of the South, but it was so badly crippled in its encounter with the privateer that it did not reach the Gulf of Mexico until ten days later than the expedition had planned to sail. The expedition waited for Lloyd and his reinforcements, so that when it finally approached New Orleans, Jackson and his frontiersmen, who had hastened down by forced marches from the North, had made preparations to give the English a warm reception. Had the expedition arrived ten days earlier it would have found the Americans unprepared, and New Orleans would have fallen.

Captain Reid and his men, landing on their native soil at Savannah, found their journey northward turned into a triumphal progress. The whole country went wild with enthusiasm. There was not a town or village on the way but did them honor. The city of Richmond gave Captain Reid a great banquet, and the State of New York presented him with a sword of honor. But of all the tributes which were paid to the little band of heroes, none had the flavor of the concluding line of a letter written by one of the British officers engaged in the action to a relative in England. "If this is the way the Americans fight," he wrote, "we may well say, 'God deliver us from our enemies.'"

THE MAN WHO DARED TO CROSS THE RANGES

As we ride westward across the mountain ranges to the Pacific with all the ease and luxury a twentieth century limited train affords, few of us can imagine that those very ranges, now tunnelled and spanned, once constituted barriers that the Spaniards in California never dreamed would be passed by trappers, prospectors, or settlers from the United States. This is the story of one of the first who dared to do that seemingly impossible thing —who risked the anger of the Spanish authorities in California, and on his return found the pass and blazed the trail across the Sierras, which later became the overland route to California.

THE MAN WHO DARED TO CROSS THE RANGES

About the word frontiersman there is a pretty air of romance. The very mention of it conjures up a vision of lean, sinewy, brown-faced men, in fur caps and moccasins and fringed buckskin, slipping through virgin forests or pushing across sun-scorched prairies—advance-guards of civilization. Hardy, resolute, taciturn figures, they have passed silently across the pages of our history and we shall see their like no more. To them we owe a debt that we can never repay—nor, indeed, have we even publicly acknowledged it. We followed by the trails which they had blazed for us; we built our towns in those rich valleys and pastured our herds on those fertile hillsides which theirs were the first white men's eyes to see.

The American frontiersman was never a self-seeker. His discoveries he left as a heritage to those who followed him. In almost every case he died poor and, more often than not, with his boots on. David Livingstone and Henry M. Stanley, the two Englishmen who did more than any other men for the opening up of Africa, lie in Westminster Abbey, and thousands of their countrymen each year stand reverently beside their tombs. To Cecil Rhodes, another Anglo-African pioneer, a great national memorial has been erected on the slopes of Table Mountain. Far, far greater parts in the conquest of a wilderness, the winning of a continent, were played by Daniel Boone, James Bowie, Kit Carson, Davy

Crockett; yet how many of those who to-day enjoy the fruits of the perils they faced, the hardships they endured, know much more of them than as characters in dime novels, can tell where they are buried, can point to any statues of monuments which have been erected to their memories?

There are nearly three million people in the State of California, and most of them boast of it as "God's own country." They have more State pride than any people that I know, yet I would be willing to wager almost anything you please that you can pick a hundred native sons of California, and put to each of them the question, "Who was Jedediah Smith?" and not one of them would be able to answer it correctly. The public parks of San Francisco and Los Angeles and San Diego and Sacramento have innumerable statues of one kind and another, but you will find none of this man with the stern old Puritan name; they are starting a hall of fame in California, but no one has proposed Jedediah Smith as deserving a place in it. Yet to him, perhaps more than to any other man, is due the fact that California is American; he was the greatest of the pathfinders; he was the real founder of the Overland Trail; he was the man who led the way across the ranges. Had it not been for the trail he blazed and the thousands who followed in his footsteps the Sierra Nevadas might still mark the line of our frontier.

The westward advance of population which took place during the first quarter of the nineteenth century far exceeded the limits of any of the great migrations of mankind upon the older continents. The story of the American onset to the beckoning West is one of the wonder-tales of history. Over the natural waterway of

the great northern lakes, down the road to Pittsburg, along the trail which skirted the Potomac, and then down the Ohio, over the passes of the Cumberland into Tennessee, round the end of the Alleghanies into the Gulf States, up the Missouri, and so across the Rockies to the headwaters of the Columbia, or southwestward from St. Louis to the Spanish settlements of Santa Fé, the hardy pioneers poured in an ever-increasing stream, carrying with them little but axe, spade, and rifle, some scanty household effects, a small store of provisions, a liberal supply of ammunition, and unlimited faith, courage, and enterprise.

During that brief period the people of the United States extended their occupation over the whole of that vast region lying between the Alleghanies and the Rockies—a territory larger than all of Europe, without Russia—annexed it from the wilderness, conquered, subdued, improved, cultivated, civilized it, and all without one jot of governmental assistance. Throughout these years, as the frontiersmen pressed into the West, they continued to fret and strain against the Spanish boundaries. The Spanish authorities, and after them the Mexican, soon became seriously alarmed at this silent but resistless American advance, and from the City of Mexico orders went out to the provincial governors that Americans venturing within their jurisdiction should be treated, whenever an excuse offered, with the utmost severity. But, notwithstanding the menace of Mexican prisons, of Indian tortures, of savage animals, of thirst and starvation in the wilderness, the pioneers pushed westward and ever westward, until at last their further progress was abruptly halted by the great range of the Sierra Nevada, snow-crested, and presumably impassa-

ble, which rose like a titanic wall before them, barring their farther march.

It was at about the time of this halt in our westward progress that Captain Jedediah Smith came riding onto the scene. You must picture him as a gaunt-faced, lean-flanked, wiry man, with nerves of iron, sinews of rawhide, a skin like oak-tanned leather, and quick on his feet as a catamount. He was bearded to the ears, of course, for razors formed no part of the scanty equipment of the frontiersman, and above the beard shone a pair of very keen, bright eyes, with the concentrated wrinkles about their corners that come of much staring across sun-swept spaces. He was sparing of his words, as are most men who dwell in the great solitudes, and, like them, he was, in an unorthodox way, devout, his stern and rugged features as well as his uncompromising scriptural name betraying the grim old Puritan stock from which he sprang. His hair was long and black, and would have covered his shoulders had it not been tied at the back of the neck by a leather thong. His dress was that of the Indian adapted to meet the requirements of the adventuring white man: a hunting-shirt and trousers of fringed buckskin, embroidered moccasins of elkhide, and a cap made from the glossy skin of a beaver, with the tail hanging down behind.

On hot desert marches, and in camp, he took off the beaver-skin cap and twisted about his head a bright bandanna, which, when taken with his gaunt, unshaven face, made him look uncommonly like a pirate. These garments were by no means fresh and gaudy, like those affected by the near-frontiersmen you see on motion-picture screens; instead they were very soiled and much worn and greasy, and gave evidence of having

done twenty-four hours' duty a day for many months at a stretch. Hanging on his chest was a capacious powder-horn, and in his belt was a long, straight knife, very broad and heavy in the blade—a first cousin of that deadly weapon to which James Bowie was in after years to give his name; in addition he carried a rifle, with an altogether extraordinary length of barrel, which brought death to any living thing within a thousand yards on which its foresight rested. His mount was a plains-bred pony, as wiry and unkempt and enduring as himself. Everything considered, Smith could have been no gentle-looking figure, and I rather imagine that, if he were alive and ventured into a Western town to-day, he would probably be arrested by the local constable as an undesirable character. I have now sketched for you, in brief, bold outline, as good a likeness of Smith as I am able with the somewhat scanty materials at hand, for he lived and did his pioneering in the days when frontiersmen were as common as traffic policemen are now, added to which the men who were familiar with his exploits were of a sort more ready with their pistols than with their pens.

The dates of Smith's birth and death are not vital to this story, and perhaps it is just as well that they are not, for I can find no record of when he came into the world, and only the Indian warrior who wore his scalp-lock at his waist could have told the exact date on which he went out of it. It is enough to know that, as the nineteenth century was passing the quarter mark, Smith was the head of a firm of fur-traders, Smith, Jackson & Soublette, which had obtained from President John Quincy Adams permission to hunt and trade to their hearts' content in the region lying beyond the Rocky

Mountains. It would have been much more to the point to have obtained the permission of the Mexican governor-general of the Californias, or of the great chief of the Comanches, for they held practically all of the territory in question between them.

Those were the days whose like we shall never know again, when the streams were alive with beaver, when there were more elk and antelope on the prairies than there are cattle now, and when the noise made by the moving buffalo herds sounded like the roll of distant thunder. They were the days when a fortune, as fortunes were then reckoned, awaited the man with a sure eye, a body inured to hardships, and unlimited ammunition. What the founder of the Astor fortune was doing in the Puget Sound country, Smith and his companions purposed to do beyond the Rockies; and, with this end in view, established their base camp on the eastern shores of the Great Salt Lake, not far from where Ogden now stands. This little band of pioneers formed the westernmost outpost of American civilization, for between them and the nearest settlement, at the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, stretched thirteen hundred miles of savage wilderness. Livingstone, on his greatest journey, did not penetrate half as far into unknown Africa as Smith did into unknown America, and while the English explorer was at the head of a large and well-equipped expedition, the American was accompanied by a mere handful of men.

In August, 1826, Smith and a small party of his hunters found themselves in the terrible Painted Desert, that God-forsaken expanse of sand and lava where the present States of Arizona, Utah, and Nevada meet. Water there was none, for the streams had run dry, and

the horses and pack-mules were dying of thirst and exhaustion; the game had entirely disappeared; the supplies were all but finished—and five hundred miles of the most inhospitable country in the world lay between them and their camp on Great Salt Lake. The situation was perilous, indeed, and a decision had to be made quickly if any of them were to get out alive.

"What few supplies we have left will be used up before we get a quarter way back to the camp," said Smith. "Our only chance—and I might as well tell you it's a mighty slim one, boys—is in pushing on to California."

"But California's a good four hundred miles away," expostulated his companions, "and the Sierras lie between, and no one has ever crossed them."

"Then I'll be the first man to do it," said Smith. "Besides, I've always had a hankering to learn what lies on the other side of those ranges. Now's my chance to find out."

"I reckon there ain't much chance of our ever seeing Salt Lake or California either," grumbled one of the hunters, "and even if we do reach the coast the Mexicans'll clap us into prison."

"Well, so fur's I'm concerned," said Smith decisively, "I'd rather be alive and in a Greaser prison than to be dead in the desert. I'm going to California or die on the way."

History chronicles few such marches. Westward pressed the little troop of pioneers, across the sun-baked lava-beds of southwestern Utah, over the arid deserts and the barren ranges of southern Nevada, and so to the foot-hills of that great Sierran range which rears itself ten thousand feet skyward, forming a barrier which had theretofore separated the fertile lands of the Pacific

slope from the rest of the continent more effectually than an ocean. The lava-beds gave way to sand wastes dotted with clumps of sage-brush and cactus, and the cactus changed to stunted pines, and the pines ran out in rocks, and the rocks became covered with snow, and still Smith and his hunters struggled on, emaciated, tattered, almost barefooted, lamed by the cactus spines on the desert, and the stones on the mountain slopes, until at last they stood upon the very summit of the range and, like that other band of pioneers in an earlier age, looked down on the promised land after their wanderings in the wilderness. No explorer in the history of the world, not Columbus, nor Pizarro, nor Champlain, nor De Soto, ever gazed upon a land so fertile and so full of beauty. The mysterious, the jealously guarded, the storied land of California lay spread before them like a map in bas-relief. Then the descent of the western slope began, the transition from snow-clad mountain peaks to hillsides clothed with subtropical vegetation amazing the Americans by its suddenness. Imagine how like a dream come true it must have been to these men, whose lives had been spent in the less kindly climate and amid the comparatively scanty vegetation of the Middle West, to suddenly find themselves in this fairy-land of fruit and flowers!

"It is, indeed, a white man's country," said Smith prophetically, as, leaning on his long rifle, he gazed upon the wonderful panorama which unrolled itself before him. "Though it is Mexican just now, sooner or later it must and shall be ours."

Heartened by the sight of this wonderful new country, and by the knowledge that they must be approaching some of the Mexican settlements, but with bodies sadly

After a painting by Frederick Remington. Copyrighted, P. H. Collier & Son.

Westward pressed the little troop of pioneers, across the sun-baked lava beds of southwest Utah.

weakened from exposure, hunger, and exhaustion, the Americans slowly made their way down the slope, crossed those fertile lowlands which are now covered with groves of orange and lemon, and so, guided by some friendly Indians whom they met, came at last to the mission station of San Gabriel, one of that remarkable chain of outposts of the church founded by the indefatigable Franciscan, Father Junipero Serra. The little company of worn and weary men sighted the red-tiled roof of the mission just at sunset.

I doubt if there was a more astonished community between the oceans than was the monastic one of San Gabriel when this band of ragged strangers suddenly appeared from nowhere and asked for food and shelter.

"You come from the South—from Mexico?" queried the father superior, staring, half-awed, at these gaunt, fierce-faced, bearded men who spoke in a strange tongue.

"No, padre," answered Smith, calling to his aid the broken Spanish he had picked up in his trading expeditions to Santa Fé, "we come from the East, from the country beyond the great mountains, from the United States. We are Americans," he added a little proudly.

"They say they come from the East," the brown-robed monks whispered to each other. "It is impossible. No one has ever come from that direction. Have not the Indians told us many times that there is no food, no water in that direction, and that, moreover, there is no way to cross the mountains? It is, indeed, a strange and incredible tale that these men tell. But we will offer them our hospitality in the name of the blessed St. Francis, for that we withhold from no man; but it is the part of wisdom to despatch a messenger to San Diego to acquaint the governor of their coming, for it

may well be that they mean no good to the people of this land."

Had the good monks been able to look forward a few score years, perhaps they would not have been so ready to offer Smith and his companions the shelter of the mission roof. But how were they to know that these ragged strangers, begging for food at their mission door, were the skirmishers for a mighty host which would one day pour over those mountain ranges to the eastward as the water pours over the falls at Niagara; that within rifle-shot of where their mission stood a city of a million souls would spread itself across the hills; that down the dusty Camino Real, which the founder of their mission had trudged so often in his sandals and woollen robe, would whirl strange horseless, panting vehicles, putting a mile a minute behind their flying wheels; that twin lines of steel would bring their southernmost station at San Diego within twenty hours, instead of twenty days, of their northernmost outpost at Sonoma; and that over this new land would fly, not the red-white-and-green standard of Mexico, but an alien banner of stripes and stars?

The four years which intervened between the collapse of Spanish rule in Mexico and the arrival of Jedediah Smith at San Gabriel were marked by political chaos in the Californias. When a governor of Alta California rose in the morning he did not know whether he was the representative of an emperor, a king, a president, or a dictator. As a result of these perennial disorders, the Mexican officials ascribed sinister motives to the most innocent episodes. No sooner, therefore, did Governor Echeandia learn of the arrival in his province of a mysterious party of Americans than he ordered them

brought under escort to San Diego for examination. Though those present probably did not appreciate it, the meeting of Smith and Echeandia in the palace at San Diego was a peculiarly significant one.

There sat at his ease in his great chair of state the saturnine Mexican governor, arrogant and haughty, beruffled and gold-laced, his high-crowned sombrero and his velvet jacket heavy with bullion, while in front of him stood the American frontiersman, gaunt, unshaven, and ragged, but as cool and self-possessed as though he was at the head of a conquering army instead of a forlorn hope. The one was as truly the representative of a passing as the other was of a coming race. Small wonder that Echeandia, as he observed the hardy figures and determined faces of the Americans, thought to himself how small would be Mexico's chance of holding California if others of their countrymen began to follow in their footsteps.

He and his officials cross-examined Smith as closely as though the frontiersman was a prisoner on trial for his life, as, in a sense, he was, for almost any fate might befall him and his companions in that remote corner of the continent without any one being called to account for it. Smith described the series of misfortunes which had led him to cross the ranges; he asserted that he desired nothing so much as to get back into American territory again, and he earnestly begged the governor to provide him with the necessary provisions and permit him to depart. His story was so frank and plausible that Echeandia, with characteristic Spanish suspicion, promptly disbelieved every word of it, for why, he argued, should any sane man make so hazardous a journey unless he were a spy and well paid to risk his life?

For even in those early days, remember, the Mexicans had begun to fear the ambitions of the young republic to the eastward. So, despite their protests, he ordered the Americans to be imprisoned—and no one knew better than they did that, once within the walls of a Mexican prison, there was small chance of their seeing the outside world again. Fortunately for the explorers, however, it so happened that there were three American trading-schooners lying in San Diego harbor at the time, and their captains, determined to see the rights of their fellow countrymen respected, joined in a vigorous and energetic protest to the governor against this high-handed and unjustified action. This seems to have frightened Echeandia, for he reluctantly gave orders for the release of Smith and his companions, but ordered them to leave the country at once, and by the same route by which they had come.

When the year 1827 was but a few days old, therefore, the Americans turned their faces northward, but instead of retracing their steps in accordance with Echeandia's orders, they crossed the coast range, probably through the Tejon Pass, and kept on through the fertile region now known as the San Joaquin Valley, in the hope that by crossing the Sierra farther to the northward they would escape the terrible rigors of the Colorado desert. When some three hundred miles north of San Gabriel they attempted to recross the ranges, but a feat that had been hazardous in midsummer was impossible in midwinter, and the entire expedition nearly perished in the attempt. Several of the men and all the horses died of cold and hunger, and it was only by incredible exertions that Smith and his few remaining companions, terribly frozen and totally exhausted, managed to reach the Santa Clara Valley and Mission San José.

So slow was their progress that the news of their approach preceded them and caused considerable disquietude to the monks. Learning from the Indians that he and his followers were objects of suspicion, Smith sent a letter to the father superior, in which he gave an account of his arrival at San Gabriel, of his interview with the governor, of his disaster in the Sierras, and of his present pitiable condition. "I am a long way from home," this pathetic missive concludes, "and am anxious to get there as soon as the nature of the case will permit. Our situation is quite unpleasant, being destitute of clothing and most of the necessaries of life, wild meat being our principal subsistence. I am, reverend father, your strange but real friend and Christian brother, Jedediah Smith." As a result of this appeal, the hospitality of the mission was somewhat grudgingly extended to the Americans, who were by this time in the most desperate condition.

Hardships that would kill ordinary men were but unpleasant incidents in the lives of the pioneers, however, and in a few weeks they were as fit as ever to resume their journey. But, upon thinking the matter over, Smith decided that he would never be content if he went back without having found out what lay still farther to the northward, for in him was the insatiable curiosity and the indomitable spirit of the born explorer. But as his force, as well as his resources, had become sadly depleted, he felt it imperative that he should first return to Salt Lake and bring on the men, horses, and provisions he had left there. Accordingly, leaving most of his party in camp at San José, he set out with only two companions, recrossed the Sierra at one of its highest points (the place he crossed is where the railway comes

through to-day) and after several uncomfortably narrow escapes from landslides and from Indians, eventually reached the camp on Great Salt Lake, where he found that his people had long since given him and his companions up for dead.

Breaking camp on a July morning, in 1827, Smith, with eighteen men and two women, turned his face once more toward California. To avoid the snows of the high Sierras, he chose the route he had taken on his first journey, reaching the desert country to the north of the Colorado River in early August. It was not until the party had penetrated too far into the desert to retreat that they found that the whole country was burnt up. For several days they pushed on in the hope of finding water. Across the yellow sand wastes they would sight the sparkle of a crystal lake, and would hasten toward it as fast as their jaded animals could carry them, only to find that it was a mirage.

Then the horrors preliminary to death by thirst began: the animals, their blackened tongues protruding from their mouths, staggered and fell, and rose no more; the women grew delirious and babbled incoherent nothings; even the hardiest of the men stumbled as they marched, or tried to frighten away by shouts and gestures the fantastic shapes which danced before them. At last there came a morning when they could go no farther. Such of them as still retained their faculties felt that it was the end—that is, all but Jedediah Smith. He was of the breed which does not know the meaning of defeat, because they are never defeated until they are dead. Loading himself with the empty water-bottles, he set out alone into the desert, determined to follow one of the numerous buffalo trails, for he knew

that sooner or later it must lead him to water of some sort, even if to nothing more than a buffalo-wallow.

Racked with the fever of thirst, his legs shaking from exhaustion, he plodded on, under the pitiless sun, mile after mile, hour after hour, until, struggling to the summit of a low divide, he saw the channel of a stream in the valley beneath him. The expedition was saved. Stumbling and sliding down the slope in his haste to quench his intolerable thirst, he came to a sudden halt on the river-bank. It was nothing but an empty watercourse into which he was staring—the river had run dry! The shock of such a disappointment would have driven most men mad. Only for a moment, however, was the veteran frontiersman staggered; he knew the character of many streams in the West—that often their waters run underground a few feet below the surface, and in a moment he was on his knees digging frantically in the soft sand. Soon the sand began to grow moist, and then the coveted water slowly began to filter upward into the little excavation he had hollowed.

Throwing himself flat on the ground, he buried his burning face in the muddy water—and as he did so a shower of arrows whistled about him. A war-party of Comanches, unobserved, had followed and surrounded him. He had but exchanged the danger of death by thirst for the even more dreadful fate of death by torture. Though struck by several of the arrows, he held the Indians off until he had filled his water-bottles; then, retreating slowly, taking advantage of every particle of cover, as only a veteran plainsman can, blazing away with his unerring rifle whenever an Indian was incautious enough to show himself, Smith succeeded in getting back to his companions with the precious water.

With their dead animals for breastworks, the pioneers succeeded in holding the Indians at bay for six-and-thirty hours, but on the second night the redskins, heavily reinforced, rushed them in the night, ten of the men and the two women being killed in the hand-to-hand fight which ensued, and the few horses which remained alive being stampeded. I rather imagine that the women were shot by their own husbands, for the women of the frontier always preferred death to capture by these fiends in paint and feathers.

How Smith, calling to his assistance all his craft and experience as a plainsman, managed to lead his eight surviving companions through the encircling Indians by night, and how, wounded, horseless, and provisionless as they were, he succeeded in guiding them across the ranges to San Bernardino, is but another example of this forgotten hero's courage and resource. Having lost everything that he possessed, for the whole of his scanty savings had been invested in the ill-fated expedition, Smith, with such of his men as were strong enough to accompany him, set out to rejoin the party he had left some months previously at Mission San José. Scarcely had he set foot within that settlement, however, before he was arrested and taken under escort to Monterey, where he was led before the governor, who, he found to his surprise and dismay, was no other than his old enemy of San Diego, Don José Echeandia.

This time nothing would convince Echeandia that Smith was not the leader of an expedition which had territorial designs on California, and he promptly ordered him to be taken to prison and kept in solitary confinement as a dangerous conspirator. Thereupon Smith resorted to the same expedient he had used so success-

fully, and begged the captains of the American vessels in the harbor of Monterey for protection. So forcible were their representations that Echeandia finally agreed to release Smith on his swearing to leave California for good and all.

To this proposal Smith willingly agreed and took the oath required of him, but, upon being released from prison, was astounded to learn that the governor had given orders that he must set out alone—that his hunters would not be permitted to accompany him. His and their protestations were disregarded. Smith must start at once and unaccompanied. He was given a horse and saddle, provisions, blankets, a rifle—and nothing more. It was a sentence of death which Echeandia had pronounced on this American frontiersman, and both he and Smith knew it. Without having committed any crime—unless it was a crime to be an American—Jedediah Smith was driven out of the territory of a supposedly friendly nation, and told that he was at perfect liberty to make his way across two thousand miles of wilderness to the nearest American outpost—if he could.

Striking back into that range of the Sierras which lies southeast of Fresno, Smith succeeded in crossing them for a fourth time, evidently intending to make his way back to his old stamping-ground on the Great Salt Lake. Our knowledge of what occurred after he had crossed the ranges for the last time is confined to tales told to the settlers in later years by the Indians. While emerging from the terrible Death Valley, where hundreds of emigrants were to lose their lives during the rush to the gold-fields a quarter of a century later, he was attacked at a water-hole by a band of Indians.

For many years afterward the Comanches were wont

to tell with admiration how this lone paleface, coming from out of the setting sun, had knelt behind his dead horse and held them off with his deadly rifle all through one scorching summer's day. But when nightfall came they crept up silently under cover of the darkness and rushed him. His scalp was highly valued, for it had cost the lives of twelve Comanche braves.

But Jedediah Smith did not die in vain. Tales of the rich and virgin country which he had found beyond the ranges flew as though with wings across the land; soon other pioneers made their way over the mountains by the trails which he had blazed; long wagon-trains crawled westward by the routes which he had taken; strange bands of horsemen pitched their tents in the valleys where he had camped. The mission bells grew silent; the monk in his woollen robe and the *caballero* in his gold-laced jacket passed away; settlements of hardy, energetic, nasal-voiced folk from beyond the Sierras sprang up everywhere. Then one day a new flag floated over the presidio in Monterey—a flag that was not to be pulled down. The American republic had reached the western ocean, and thus was fulfilled the dream of Jedediah Smith, the man who showed the way.

UNDER THE FLAG OF THE LONE STAR

It is doubtful if an army patrol along the border could have kept back the eager settlers bound for the Spanish territory that was later to become Texas. In the earlier part of the nineteenth century they went under official encouragement from the Spanish. There was adventure for the adventurous; unlimited range for the cattleman; rolling prairies for the grain-grower; and rich river-valleys for the cotton-planter. Soon after Mexico became a republic there was a change of policy from encouragement to oppression. The safety and the liberties of thousands of Americans were put in jeopardy when the privilege of self-government was taken from them. How Santa Anna was ingloriously defeated in his scheme to deprive the Texans of their rights; how deeds of valor comparable to any in history were performed by such men as Crockett, Travis, and Bowie; how that extraordinary man of the hour, Sam Houston, took the desperate chance for victory against a well-equipped force of twice his number and dictated to the captured Mexican president the terms of independence for Texas—these exploits constitute a portion of our history we cannot neglect if we are to understand the spirit of westward pioneer movements which at the time seemed so obviously in the path of our destiny.

UNDER THE FLAG OF THE LONE STAR

HAD you stood on the banks of the Brazos in December of the year in which the nineteenth century became old enough to vote and looked northeastward across the plains of central Texas, your attention would doubtless have been attracted by a rolling cloud of dust. From out its yellow haze would have crept in time a straggling line of canvas-covered wagons. Iron-hard, bearded men, their faces tanned to the color of a much-used saddle, strode beside the wheels, their long-lashed blacksnakes cracking spasmodically, like pistol-shots, between the horns of the plodding oxen. Weary-faced women in sunbonnets and calico, with broods of barelegged, frowzy-headed youngsters huddled about them, peered curiously from beneath the arching wagon-tops. A thin fringe of scouts astride of wiry ponies, long-barrelled rifles resting on the pommels of their saddles, rode on either flank of the slowly moving column. Other groups of alert and keen-eyed horsemen led the way and brought up the rear. Though these dusty migrants numbered less than half a thousand in all, though their garments were uniform only in their stern practicality and their shabby picturesqueness, though their only weapons were hunting-rifles and the only music to which they marched was the rattle of harness and the creak of axletrees, they formed, nevertheless, an army of invasion, bent on the conquest not of a people, however, but of a wilderness.

Who that saw that dusty column trailing across the Texan plains would have dreamed that these gaunt and

shabby men and women were destined to conquer and civilize and add to our national domain a territory larger than the German Empire, with Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium thrown in? Yet that trek of the pioneers, "southwesterly by the lone star," was the curtain-raiser for that most thrilling of historic dramas, or rather, melodramas: the taking of Texas.

To understand the significance of that chain of startling and picturesque events which began with the stand of the settlers on the Guadalupe and culminated in the victory on the San Jacinto, without at least a rudimentary knowledge of the conditions which led up to it, is as impossible as it would be to master trigonometry without a knowledge of arithmetic. But fear not that you will be bored by the recital; the story is punctuated much too frequently with the crack of rifle and pistol for you to yawn or become sleepy-eyed.

The American colonization of Texas—then known as the province of New Estremadura—began while Spain still numbered Mexico among her colonial possessions. When Iturbide ended Spanish rule in Mexico, in 1821, and thereby made himself Emperor of the third largest nation in the world (China and Russia alone being of greater area), he promptly confirmed the land grants which had been made by the Spanish authorities to the American settlers in Texas, both he and his immediate successors being only too glad to further the development of the wild and almost unknown region above the Rio Grande by these hardy, thrifty, industrious folk from the north. Under this official encouragement an ever-growing, ever widening stream of American emigration went rolling Texasward. The forests echoed to the axe strokes of woodsmen from Kentucky; the desert was fur-

rowed by the ploughshares of Ohio farmers; villages sprang up along the rivers; the rolling prairies were dotted with patches of ripening grain. Texas quickly became the magnet which drew thousands of the needy, the desperate, and the adventurous. Men of broken fortunes, men of roving habits, adventurers, land speculators, disappointed politicians, unsuccessful lawyers, men who had left their country for their country's good, as well as multitudes of sturdy, thrifty, hard-working folk desirous of finding homes for their increasing families poured into the land of promise afoot and on horseback, by boat and wagon-train, until, by 1823, there were probably not far from twenty thousand of these American outlanders established between the Sabine and the Pecos.

Meanwhile the government of Mexico was beginning the quick-change act with which it has alternately amused and exasperated the world to this day. The short-lived empire of Iturbide lasted but a year, the Emperor meeting his end with his back to a stone wall and his face to a firing-party. Victoria proclaimed Mexico a republic and himself its President. Pedraza succeeded him in 1828. Then Guerrero overthrew Pedraza, and Bustamente overthrew Guerrero, and Santa Anna overthrew Bustamente and made himself dictator, ruling the war-racked country with an iron hand. Now, a dictator, if he is to hold his job, much less enjoy any peace of mind, must rule a people who, either through fear or ignorance, are willing to forget about their constitutional rights and obligingly refrain from asking questions. But the American settlers in Texas, as each of the Mexican usurpers discovered in his turn and to his very great annoyance, were not

built according to these specifications. They were not ignorant, and they were not in the least afraid, and when the privileges they had enjoyed were revoked or curtailed they resented it vigorously.

Alarmed by the rapid increase in the number of American settlers, disturbed by their independence and self-reliance, and realizing that they were daily becoming a greater menace to the tyrannical and dishonest methods of government which prevailed, the Mexican dictators determined to crush them before it was too late. In pursuance of this policy they inaugurated a systematic campaign of persecution. Sixty-odd years later the Boers adopted the same attitude toward the British settlers in the Transvaal that the Mexicans did toward the American settlers in Texas, and the same thing happened in both cases.

For three years after Mexico achieved its independence Texas remained a separate State of the republic, with a government of its own. But in 1824, in pursuance of this anti-American policy, it was deprived of the privilege of self-government and added to the State of Coahuila. Shortly after this a law was passed forbidding the further settlement of Americans in Texas and prohibiting Americans from even trading in that region. And, to still further harass and humiliate the Texans, a number of penal colonies, composed of the most desperate criminals in the Mexican prisons, were established in Texas. Heretofore the Texans, in recognition of their services in transforming Texas from a savage wilderness into a civilized and prosperous province, had enjoyed immunity from taxes, but now custom-houses were established and the settlers were charged prohibitive duties even on the necessities of life. When they protested against so

flagrant an injustice the Mexican Government answered them by blockading their ports. Heavy garrisons were now quartered in the principal towns, the civil authorities were defied, and the settlers were subjected to the tyranny of unrestrained military rule.

Still the Texans did not offer armed resistance. Their tight-drawn patience snapped, however, when, in 1834, Santa Anna, determined to crush for good and all the sturdy independence which animated them, ordered his brother-in-law, General Cos, to enter Texas with a force of fifteen hundred men and disarm the Americans, leaving only one rifle to every five hundred inhabitants. That order was all that was needed to fan the smouldering embers of Texan resentment into the fierce flame of armed revolt. Were they to be deprived of those trusty rifles which they had brought with them on their long pilgrimage from the north, which were their only resource for game, their only defense against Indians, their only means of resistance to oppression? Those were the questions that the settlers asked themselves, and they answered them at Gonzales, on the banks of the Guadalupe.

At Gonzales was a small brass field-piece which had been given to the settlers as a protection from the Indians. A detachment of Mexican cavalry, some eight-score strong, was ordered to go to the town, capture the cannon, and disarm the inhabitants. News of their coming preceded them, however, and when the troopers reached the banks of the river opposite the town they found that all the boats had been taken to the other side, while the cannon which they had come to capture was drawn up in full view with a placard hanging from it. The placard bore the ominous invitation: "Come

and take it." The Mexican commander, spurring his horse to the edge of the river, insolently called upon the inhabitants to give up their arms. It was the same demand, made for the same purpose, which an officer in a scarlet coat had made of another group of Americans, threescore years before, on the village green at Lexington. It was the same demand! And the same answer was given: "Come and take our weapons—if you can!" Though the Mexican officer had a force which outnumbered the settlers almost ten to one, he prudently decided to wait, for even in those days the fame of the Texan riflemen had spread across the land.

Meanwhile horsemen had carried the news of the raid on Gonzales to the outlying ranches and soon the settlers came pouring in until by nightfall they very nearly equalled the soldiery in number. Knowing the moral effect of getting in the first blow, they slipped across the river in the dark and charged the Mexican camp with an impetuosity and fierceness which drove the troopers back in panic-stricken retreat. As the Texans were going into action a parson who accompanied them shouted: "Remember, men, that we're fighting for our liberty! Our wives, our children, our homes, our country are at stake! The strong arm of Jehovah will lead us on to victory and to glory! Come on, men! Come on!"

The news of this victory, though insignificant in itself, was as kindling thrown on the fires of insurrection. The settlers in Texas rose as one. In October, 1835, in a pitched battle near the Mission of the Immaculate Conception, outside of San Antonio, ninety-four Texan farmers, fresh from the plough, whipped four times that number of Mexicans. In December, after a five days' siege, the Alamo, in San Antonio, was carried by storm,

General Cos and fourteen hundred Mexican regulars, with twenty-one pieces of artillery, surrendering to less than four hundred Texans. By Christmas of 1835 Texas was left without an armed enemy within her borders.

When word was brought to Santa Anna that the garrison of the Alamo had surrendered, he behaved like a madman. With clinched fists and uplifted arms he swore by all the saints in the calendar and all the devils in hell that he would never unbuckle his sword-belt until Texas was again a wilderness and every *gringo* settler was a fugitive, a prisoner, or a corpse. As it was at San Antonio that the Mexicans had suffered their most humiliating defeat, so it was San Antonio that the dictator chose as the place where he would wash out that defeat in blood, and on the 22d of February, 1836, he appeared before the city at the head of six thousand troops—the flower of the Mexican army. After their capture of San Antonio the Texans, most of whom were farmers, had returned to their homes and their crops, Colonel W. Barrett Travis being left to hold the town with only one hundred and forty-five men. With him were Davy Crockett, the stories of whose exploits on the frontier were already familiar in every American household, Bonham, the celebrated scout and Indian fighter, and James Bowie, who, in a duel on a Natchez River bar, had made famous the terrible long-bladed knife which his brother Rezin had made from a blacksmith's file. A few days later thirty-seven brave hearts from Goliad succeeded in breaking through the lines of the besiegers, bringing the total strength of the garrison up to one hundred and eighty-three. Surrounding them was an army of six thousand!

The story of the last stand in the Alamo has been told

so often that I hesitate to repeat it here. Yet it is a tale of which Americans can never tire any more than they can tire of the story of Jones and the *Bonhomme Richard*, or of Perry on Lake Erie. The Texans, too few in numbers to defend the town, withdrew into the Alamo, an enormously thick-walled building, half fortress and half church, which derived its name from being built in a clump of *álamos* or cottonwood-trees. For eleven days the Mexicans pounded the building with artillery and raked it with rifle-fire; for eleven days the Texans held them back in that historic resistance whose details are so generally and so uncertainly known. Day after day the defenders strained their eyes across the prairie in search of the help that never came. Day after day the blood-red flag that signified "No quarter" floated above the Mexican lines, while from the walls of the Alamo flaunted defiantly the flag with a single star.

At sunset on the 4th of March the Mexican bombardment abruptly ceased, but no one knew better than Travis that it was but the lull which preceded the breaking of the storm. Drawing up his men in the great chapel, Travis drew a line across the earthen floor with his sword.

"Men," he said, "it's all up with us. A few more hours and we shall probably all be dead. There's no use hoping for help, for no force that our friends could send us could cut its way through the Mexican lines. So there's nothing left for it but to stay here and go down fighting. When the greasers storm the walls kill them as they come and keep on killing them until none of us are left. But I leave it to every man to decide for himself. Those who wish to go out and surrender may do so and I shall not reproach them. As for me, I shall

stay here and die for Texas. Those who wish to stay with me will step across this line."

There was not so much as a flicker of hesitation. The defenders moved across the line as one. Even the wounded staggered over with the others, and those who were too badly wounded to walk dragged themselves across on hands and knees. Bowie, who was ill with fever, lay on his cot, too weak to move. "Boys," he called feebly, "boys, I don't believe I can get over alone . . . won't some of you help me?" So they carried him across the line, bed and all. It was a picture to stir the imagination, to send the thrills of patriotism chasing up and down one's spine: the gloomy chapel with its adobe walls and raftered ceiling; the line of stern-faced, powder-grimed men in their tattered frontier dress, crimsoned bandages knotted about the heads of many of them; the fever-racked but indomitable Bowie stretched upon his cot; the young commander—for Travis was but twenty-seven—striding up and down, in his hand a naked sword, in his eyes the fire of patriotism.

On the morning of the 6th of March, before the sun had risen, Santa Anna launched his grand assault. Their bugles sounding the ominous notes of the *degüello*, which signified that no quarter would be given, the Mexican infantry, provided with scaling-ladders, swept forward at the double. Behind them rode the cavalry, with orders to sabre any man who flinched. As the Mexican columns came within range the Texans met them with a blast of lead which shrivelled and scattered them as the breath of winter shrivels and scatters the autumn leaves. The men behind the walls of the Alamo were master marksmen who had taken their degree in

shooting from the stern college of the frontier, and they proved their marvellous proficiency that day. Crockett and Bonham aimed and fired as fast as rifles could be loaded and passed up to them, and at every spurt of flame a little, brown-faced man would drop with a crimson patch on the breast of his tunic or a round blue hole in his forehead.

Any troops on earth would have recoiled in the face of that deadly fire, and Santa Anna's were no exception. But the cavalry rode into them and at the point of their sabres forced them again to the attack. Again the shattered regiments advanced and attempted to place their ladders against the walls, but once more the sheer ferocity of the Texan defense sent them reeling back, bleeding and gasping. But there was a limit even to the powers of resistance of the Texans. The powder in their horns ran low; their arms grew weak from slaying. So, when the wave of brown-skinned soldiery rolled forward once again over its carpet of corpses, it topped and overflowed the desperately defended walls. The Texans, whose ammunition was virtually exhausted, were beaten back by sheer weight of numbers, but they rallied in the patio and, under the sky of Texas, made their final stand.

What happened afterward is, and always must be, a matter of speculation. No one knows the story of the end. Even the number of victims is a matter of dispute to-day. Some say there were a hundred and eighty-three defenders, some say a hundred and eighty-six. Some assert that one woman escaped; some say two; others say none. Some declare that a negro servant got away; others declare with equal positiveness that he did not. Some state that half a dozen Americans

stood at bay with their backs to the wall, Crockett among them. That the Mexican general, Castrillon, offered them their lives if they would surrender, and that, when they took him at his word, he ordered them shot down like dogs. All we do know with any certainty of what went on within those blood-bespattered walls is that every American died fighting. Travis, revolver in one hand and sword in the other, went down amid a ring of men that he had slain. Bowie, propped on his pillows, shot two soldiers who attempted to bayonet him as he lay all but helpless and plunged his terrible knife into the throat of another before they could finish him. Crockett, so the Mexicans related afterward, fought to the last with his broken rifle, and was killed against the wall, but to get at him the Mexicans had to scramble over a heap of their own dead. No one will ever know how many of the enemy each of these raging, fighting, cornered men sent down the long and gloomy road before he followed them. Not an American remained alive. Death and Santa Anna held the place. As the inscription on the monument which was raised in later years to the defenders reads: "Thermopylæ had her messenger of defeat; the Alamo had none." But before they died, the ninescore men who laid down their lives for Texas sent *sixteen hundred* Mexicans to their last accounting.

While Santa Anna was besieging the Alamo, General Urrea invaded eastern Texas for the purpose of capturing San Patricio, Refugio, and Goliad and thus stamping out the last embers of insurrection. It was not a campaign; it was a butchery. The little garrison of San Patricio was taken by surprise and every man put to death. At Refugio, however, a force of little more

than a hundred men under Colonel Ward repulsed the Mexicans, whose loss in killed and wounded was double the entire number of the defenders. A few days later, however, Ward and his men, while falling back, were surrounded and taken prisoners. When Urrea's column appeared before Goliad, Colonel Fannin, whose force was outnumbered six to one, ordered a retreat, feeling confident that the Mexicans, for whose fighting abilities the Texans had the utmost contempt, would not dare to follow them. But the Texans made the fatal mistake of underrating their adversaries, for, before they had fallen back a dozen miles, they found themselves hemmed in by two thousand Mexicans.

Escape was out of the question, so Fannin formed his three hundred men in hollow square and prepared to put up one of those fight-till-the-last-man-falls resistances for which the Texans had become famous. Being cut off from water, however, and with a third of his men wounded, he realized that his chances of success were represented by a cipher; so, when the Mexican commander, who had been heavily reinforced, offered to parole both officers and men and return them to the United States if they would surrender, Fannin accepted the offer and ordered his men to stack their arms. The terms of the surrender were written in both English and Spanish, and were signed by the ranking officers of both forces with every formality.

The Texan prisoners were marched back under guard to Goliad, the town they had so recently evacuated, and were confined in the old fort, where they were joined a few days later by Colonel Ward's command, who, as you will remember, had also been captured. On the night of the 26th of March a despatch rider rode into

Urrea's camp bearing a message from Santa Anna. It contained an order for the murder of all the prisoners. The next day was Palm Sunday. At dawn the Texans were awakened and ordered to form ranks in the courtyard. They were then divided into four parties and marched off in different directions under heavy guard. They had not proceeded a mile across the prairies before they were halted and their captors deliberately poured volley after volley into them until not a Texan was left standing. Then the cavalry rode over the corpse-strewn ground, hacking with their sabres at the dead. Upward of four hundred Texans were slaughtered at Goliad. The defenders of the Alamo died fighting with weapons in their hands, but these men were unarmed and defenseless prisoners, butchered in cold blood in one of the most atrocious massacres of history.

With the extermination of the Texan garrisons, Santa Anna complacently assured himself that his work in the north was finished and prepared to return to the capital, where he was badly needed. It is never safe, you see, for a dictator to leave the chair of state for long, else he is likely to return and find a rival sitting in it. Now, however, Santa Anna felt that the Texan uprising was, to make use of a slangy but expressive phrase, all over but the shouting. But the Texans, as stout old John Paul Jones would have put it, had only just begun to fight. Learning that a force of Texan volunteers was mobilizing upon the San Jacinto, the "Napoleon of the West," as Santa Anna modestly described himself, decided to delay his departure long enough to invade the country north of Galveston and put the finishing touches to the subjugation of Texas by means of a final carnival of blood and fire. Theoretically, everything favored the

dictator. He had money; he had ample supplies of arms and ammunition; he had a force of trained and seasoned veterans far outnumbering any with which the Texans could oppose him. It was to be a veritable picnic of a campaign, a sort of butchers' holiday. In making his plans, however, Santa Anna failed to take a certain person into consideration. The name of that person was Sam Houston.

The chronicles of our frontier record the name of no more picturesque and striking figure than Houston. The fertile brain of George A. Henty could not have made to order a more satisfactory or wholly improbable hero. Though his exploits are a part of history, they read like the wildest fiction. That is why, perhaps, the dry-as-dust historians make so little mention of him. The incidents in his life would provide a motion-picture company with material for years. Born in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, his father, who had been an officer in the Revolution, answered to the last roll-call when young Sam had barely entered his teens. The support of a large and growing family thus falling upon the energetic shoulders of Mrs. Houston, she packed her household goods in a prairie-schooner and moved with her children to Tennessee, then upon the very edge of civilization. Here Sam, who had learned his "three R's" in such poor schools as the Virginia of those early days afforded, attended a local academy for a time. Translations of the classics having fallen into his hands, his imagination was captured by the exploits of the heroes of antiquity, and he asked permission of the principal to study Latin, which, for some unexplainable reason, was curtly refused him. Whereupon he walked out of the academy, declaring that he would never repeat another lesson.

His family, who had scant sympathy with his romantic fancies, procured him a job as clerk in a crossroads store. Within a fortnight he was missing. After some months of anxiety his relatives learned that he was living among the Cherokee Indians across the Tennessee. When one of his brothers attempted to induce him to return home, young Sam answered that he preferred measuring deer tracks to measuring tape, and that, if he was not permitted to study Latin in the academy, he could at least dig it out for himself in the freedom of the woods. Houston dwelt for several years with his Cherokee friends, eventually being adopted as a son by the chieftain Oolooteka. Upon the outbreak of our second war with Great Britain he enlisted in the American army. Though his friends remonstrated with him for entering the army as a private soldier, his mother was made of different stuff. As he was leaving for the front she took down his father's rifle and, with tear-dimmed eyes, handed it to her son. "Here, my boy," she said bravely, though her voice quavered, "take this rifle and never disgrace it. Remember that I would rather that all my sons should lie in honorable graves than that one of them should turn his back to save his life. Go, and God be with you, but never forget that, while my door is always open to brave men, it is always shut to cowards."

Houston quickly climbed the ladder of promotion, obtaining a commission within a year after he had enlisted as a private. He first showed the stern stuff of which he was made when taking part in General Jackson's campaign against the Creek Indians. His thigh pierced by an arrow during the storming of the Indian breastworks at Tohopeka, Houston asked a fellow officer

to draw it out. But it was sunk so deeply in the flesh that the attempt to extract it brought on an alarming flow of blood, whereupon the officer refused to proceed, fearing that Houston would bleed to death. Thereupon the fiery youngster drew his sword. "Draw it out or I'll run you through!" he said. Out the arrow came. General Jackson, who had witnessed the incident and had noted the seriousness of the young officer's wound, ordered him to the rear, but Houston, mindful of his mother's parting injunction, disregarded the order and plunged again into the thick of the battle. It was a breach of discipline, however, to which Andrew Jackson shut his eyes.

Opportunity once more knocked loudly at young Houston's door when the Creeks made their final stand at Horseshoe Bend. After the main body of the Indians had been destroyed, a party of warriors barricaded themselves in a log cabin built over a ravine in such a situation that the guns could not be brought to bear upon it. The place must be taken by storm, and Jackson called for volunteers. Houston was the only man who responded. Snatching a rifle from a soldier, he shouted, "Come on, men! Follow me!" and dashed toward the cabin. But no one had the courage to follow him into the ravine of death. Running in zigzags, to disconcert the Indian marksmen, he actually reached the cabin before he fell with a shattered arm and two rifle-bullets through his shoulder. It was just the sort of deed to win the heart of the grim old hero of New Orleans, who until his death remained one of Houston's stanchest friends.

Seeing but scant prospects of promotion in the piping times of peace which now ensued, Houston resigned from

the army, took up the study of law, and was admitted to the bar within a year from the time he opened his first law book. He practised for a few years with marked success, gave up the law for the more exciting field of politics, was elected to Congress when only thirty, and four years later became Governor of Tennessee. As the result of an unhappy marriage, and deeply wounded by the outrageous and baseless accusations made by his political opponents, he resigned the governorship and went into voluntary exile. In his trouble he turned his face toward the wigwam of his adopted father, Oolooteka, who had become the head chief of his tribe and had moved from the banks of the Tennessee to the falls of the Arkansas. Though eleven eventful years had passed, the old chief's affection for his white son had not diminished, and the exile found a warm welcome awaiting him in the wigwams and beside the council-fires of his adopted people.

Learning of the frauds by which the Indian agents were enriching themselves at the expense of the nation's wards, Houston, who had adopted Indian dress, went to Washington and laid the facts before Secretary Calhoun, who, instead of thanking him, rebuked him for presuming to appear before him in the dress of an Indian. Thereupon Houston turned his back on the secretary, and went straight to his old-time friend, President Jackson, who promptly saw to it that the guilty officials were punished. When the story of Calhoun's criticism of Houston's costume was repeated to the President, that rough old soldier remarked dryly: "I'm glad there is one man of my acquaintance who was made by the Almighty and not by the tailor."

After three years of forest life among the Indians

Houston decided to emigrate to Texas and become a ranchman, setting out with a few companions in December, 1832, for San Antonio. The romantic story of Houston's self-imposed exile had resulted in making him a national figure, and the news that he had come to Texas spread rapidly among the settlers. Before reaching Nacogdoches he learned that he had been unanimously elected a member of the convention which had been called to meet at Austin in the spring of 1833 to draft a constitution for Texas. From that time onward his story is that of his adopted country. When the rupture with Mexico came, in 1835, as a result of the attempt to disarm the settlers at Gonzales, Houston was chosen commander of the volunteer forces to be raised in eastern Texas, and after the battle at the Mission of the Immaculate Conception he was appointed commander-in-chief of the Texan army.

When Santa Anna, flushed by his bloody successes at the Alamo and Goliad, started to invade central Texas, in the spring of 1836, Houston, who had been able to raise a force of barely five hundred untrained and ill-armed men, sullenly retreated before the advance of the dictator. On the 18th of April, however, his plan of campaign was suddenly reversed by the capture of two Mexicans, from whom he learned what he had not positively known before: that Santa Anna himself was with the advance column and that he was temporarily cut off from the other divisions of his army. The chance for which Houston was waiting had come, and he seized it before it could get away. If Texas was to be free, if the Lone Star flag and not the flag with the emblem of the serpent and the buzzard was to wave over the region above the Rio Grande, it was now or never.

There were no half-way measures with Sam Houston; he determined to stake everything upon a single throw. If he won, Texas would be free; if he lost, he and his men could only go down fighting, as their fellows had gone before them. Pushing on to a point near the mouth of the San Jacinto, where it empties into the Bay of Galveston, he carefully selected the spot for his last stand, mounted the two brass cannon known as "the Twin Sisters," which had been presented to the Texans by Northern sympathizers, and sat down to wait for the coming of "the Napoleon of the West." On the morning of the 20th of April his pickets fell back before the Mexican advance, and the two great antagonists, Houston and Santa Anna, at last found themselves face to face. The dictator had with him fifteen hundred men; Houston had less than half that number—but the Texans boasted that "two to one was always fair."

At daybreak on the 21st Houston sent for his chief of scouts, the famous Deaf Smith, and ordered him to choose a companion, take axes, and secretly destroy the bridge across the San Jacinto. As the bridge was the only means of retreat for miles around, this drastic step meant utter destruction to the conquered. Talk about Cortes burning his boats behind him! He showed not a whit more courage than did Houston when he destroyed the bridge across the San Jacinto. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon he quietly paraded his little army behind the low range of hills which screened them from the enemy, who were still drowsing in their customary siesta. At this psychological moment Deaf Smith, following to the letter the instructions Houston had given him, tore up on a reeking horse, waving his axe above his head, and shouted: "Vince's Bridge is down! We've got to fight

or drown!" That was the word for which Houston had been waiting. Instantly he ordered his whole line to advance. The only music of the Texans was a fife and a drum, the musicians playing them into action to the rollicking tune of "Come to the Bower." And it was no bower of roses, either. As they swept into view, rifles at the trail and moving at the double, the Mexicans, though startled at the unexpectedness of the attack, met them with a raking fire of musketry. But the sight of the brown-faced men, and of the red-white-and-green banner which flaunted above them, infuriated the Texans to the point of frenzy. Losing all semblance of formation, they raced forward as fast as they could put foot to ground.

In front of them rode the herculean Houston, a striking figure on his white horse. "Come on, boys!" he thundered. "Get at 'em! Get at 'em! Texans, Texans, follow me!" And follow him they did, surging forward with the irresistibility of a tidal wave. "Remember the Alamo!" they roared. "Remember Goliad! Remember Travis! Remember Jim Bowie! Remember Davy Crockett!"

In the face of the maddened onslaught the Mexican line crumbled like a hillside before the stream from a hydraulic nozzle. Before the demoralized Mexicans had time to realize what had happened the Texans were in their midst. Many of them were "two-gun men," who fought with a pistol in each hand—and at every shot a Mexican fell. Others avenged the murdered Bowie with the wicked knife which bore his name, slashing and ripping and stabbing with the long, savage blades until they looked like poleaxe men in an abattoir. In vain the terrified Mexicans threw down their arms and fell upon their knees, pattering out prayers in Span-

ish and calling in their broken English: "Me no Alamo! Me no Goliad!" Within five minutes after the Texans had come to hand-grips with their foe the battle had turned into a slaughter. Houston was shot through the ankle and his horse was dying, but man and horse struggled on. Deaf Smith drove his horse into the thick of the fight and, as it fell dead beneath him, he turned his long-barrelled rifle into a war-club and literally smashed his way through the Mexican line, leaving a trail of men with broken skulls behind him. An old frontiersman named Curtis went into action carrying two guns. "The greasers killed my son and my son-in-law at the Alamo, and I'm going to get two of 'em before I die," he shouted.

In fifteen minutes the battle of the San Jacinto was over, and all that was left of Santa Anna's army of invasion was a panic-stricken mob of fugitives flying blindly across the prairie. Hard on their heels galloped the Texan cavalry, cutting down the stragglers with their sabres and herding the bulk of the flying army toward the river as cow-punchers herd cattle into a corral. And the bridge was gone! Before the Mexicans rolled the deep and turbid San Jacinto; coming up behind them were the blood-crazed Texans. It was death on either hand. Some of them spurred their horses into the river, only to be picked off with rifle-bullets as they tried to swim across. Others threw down their weapons and waited stolidly for the fatal stroke or shot. It was a bloody business. Modern history records few, if any, more sweeping victories. Of Santa Anna's army of something over fifteen hundred men, six hundred and thirty were killed, two hundred and eight wounded, and seven hundred and thirty taken prisoners.

The finishing touch was put to Houston's triumph on the following morning when a scouting party, scouring the prairie in search of fugitives, discovered a man in the uniform of a private soldier attempting to escape on hands and knees through the high grass. He was captured and marched nine miles to the Texan camp, plodding on foot in the dust in front of his mounted captors. When he lagged one of them would prick him with his lance point until he broke into a run. As the Texans rode into camp with their panting and exhausted captive, the Mexican prisoners excitedly exclaimed: "*El Presidente! El Presidente!*" It was Santa Anna, dictator of Mexico—a prisoner in the hands of the men whom he had boasted that he would make fugitives, prisoners, or corpses. Lying under the tree where he had spent the night, the wounded Houston received the surrender of "the Napoleon of the West." The war of independence was over. Texas was a republic in fact as well as in name, and the hero of the San Jacinto became its president. The defenders of the Alamo and Goliad were avenged. From the Sabine to the Rio Grande the Lone Star flag flew free.

THE PREACHER WHO RODE FOR AN EMPIRE

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century the territory which now comprises the great northwestern corner of the United States was a sort of No Man's Land. Its few white settlers were about evenly divided between Americans and English. A rumor reached Doctor Marcus Whitman, an American missionary on the Columbia, that the government of the United States, ignorant of the enormous value of this region, was about to cede it to England. With almost superhuman daring he rode across the continent in the depths of winter, laid the facts before President Tyler, and obtained his approval of a plan to lead a large party of American settlers overland to the Columbia. Whitman put his plan into execution; the new settlers established themselves in the disputed territory, and the territory which comprises the present states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and a portion of Montana, was saved for the Union.

THE PREACHER WHO RODE FOR AN EMPIRE

This is the forgotten story of the greatest ride. The history of the nation has been punctuated with other great rides, it is true. Paul Revere rode thirty miles to rouse the Middlesex minutemen and save from capture the guns and powder stored at Concord; Sheridan rode the twenty miles from Winchester to Cedar Creek and by his thunderous "Turn, boys, turn—we're going back!" saved the battle—and the names of them both are immortalized in verse that is more enduring than bronze. Whitman, the missionary, rode four thousand miles and saved us an empire, and his name is not known at all.

Though there were other actors in the great drama which culminated in the grim old preacher's memorable ride—suave, frock-coated diplomats and furtive secret agents and sun-bronzed, leather-shirted frontiersmen and bearded factors of the fur trade—the story rightfully begins and ends with Indians. There were four of them, all chieftains, and the beaded patterns on their garments of fringed buckskin and the fashion in which they wore the feathers in their hair told the plainsmen as plainly as though they had been labelled that they were listened to with respect in the councils of the Flathead tribe, whose tepees were pitched in the far nor'west. They rode their lean and wiry ponies up the dusty, unpaved thoroughfare in St. Louis known as Broadway one afternoon in the late autumn of 1832. Though the St. Louis of three-quarters of a century ago was but an

outpost on civilization's firing-line and its six thousand inhabitants were accustomed to seeing the strange, wild figures of the plains, the sudden appearance of these Indian braves, who came riding out of nowhere, clad in all the barbaric panoply of their rank, caused a distinct flutter of curiosity.

The news of their arrival being reported to General Clarke, the military commandant, he promptly assumed the ciceronage of the bewildered but impassive red men. Having, as it chanced, been an Indian commissioner in his earlier years, he knew the tribe well and could speak with them in their own guttural tongue. Beyond vouchsafing the information that they came from the upper reaches of the Columbia, from the country known as Oregon, and that they had spent the entire summer and autumn upon their journey, the Indians, with characteristic reticence, gave no explanation of the purpose of their visit. After some days had passed, however, they confided to General Clarke that rumors had filtered through to their tribe of the white man's Book of Life, and that they had been sent to seek it. To a seasoned old frontiersman like the general, this was a novel proposition to come from a tribe of remote and untamed Indians. He treated the emissaries, nevertheless, with the utmost hospitality, taking them to dances and such other entertainments as the limited resources of the St. Louis of those days afforded, and, being himself a devout Catholic, to his own church.

Thus passed the winter, during which two of the chiefs died, as a result, no doubt, of the indoor life and the unaccustomed richness of the food. When the tawny prairies became polka-dotted with bunch-grass in the spring, the two survivors made preparations for

their departure, but, before they left, General Clarke, who had taken a great liking to these dignified and intelligent red men, insisted on giving them a farewell banquet. After the dinner the elder of the chiefs was called upon for a speech. You must picture him as standing with folded arms, tall, straight and of commanding presence, at the head of the long table, a most dramatic and impressive figure in his garments of quill-embroidered buckskin, with an eagle feather slanting in his hair. He spoke with the guttural but sonorous eloquence of his people, and after each period General Clarke translated what he had said to the attentive audience of army officers, government officials, priests, merchants, and traders who lined the table.

"I have come to you, my brothers," he began, "over the trail of many moons from out of the setting sun. You were the friends of my fathers, who have all gone the long way. I have come with an eye partly open for my people, who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind, to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms through many enemies and strange lands that I might carry much back to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. Two fathers came with us; they were the braves of many winters and wars. We leave them asleep here by your great water and wigwams. They were tired in many moons, and their moccasins wore out.

"My people sent me to get the white man's Book of Life. You took me to where you allow your women to dance as we do not ours, and the Book was not there. You took me to where they worship the Great Spirit with candles, and the Book was not there. You showed

me images of the good spirits and pictures of the good land beyond, but the Book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long and sad trail to my people in the dark land. You make my feet heavy with gifts, and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them; yet the Book is not among them. When I tell my poor, blind people, after one more snow, in the big council that I did not bring the Book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go on a long path to other hunting-grounds. No white man will go with them and no white man's Book to make the way plain. I have no more words."

Just as the rude eloquence of the appeal touched the hearts of the frontier dwellers who sat about the table in St. Louis, so, when it was translated and published in the Eastern papers, it touched the hearts and fired the imaginations of the nation. In a ringing editorial *The Christian Advocate* asked: "Who will respond to go beyond the Rocky Mountains and carry the Book of Heaven?" And this was the cue for the missionary whose name was Marcus Whitman to set foot upon the boards of history.

His preparation for a frontiersman's life began early for young Whitman. Born in Connecticut when the eighteenth century had all but run its course, he was still in his swaddling-clothes when his parents, falling victims to the prevalent fever for "going West," piled their lares and penates into an ox-cart and trekked overland to the fertile lake region of central New York, Mrs. Whitman making the four-hundred-mile journey on foot, with her year-old babe in her arms. Building

a cabin with the tree-trunks cleared from the site, they began the usual pioneer's struggle for existence. His father dying before he had reached his teens, young Marcus was sent to live with his grandfather in Plainfield, Mass., where he remained ten years, learning his "three R's" in such schools as the place afforded, his education later being taken in hand by the local parson.

His youth was passed in the usual life of the country boy; to drive home the cows and milk them, to chop the wood and carry the water and do the other household chores, and, later on, to plough and plant the fields—a training which was to prove invaluable to him in after years, on the shores of another ocean. I expect that the strong, sturdy boy of ceaseless activity and indomitable will—the Plainfield folk called him mischievous and stubborn—who was fonder of hunting and fishing than of algebra and Greek, must have caused his old grandfather a good deal of worry; though, from all I can learn, he seems to have been a straightforward and likable youngster.

Very early he set his heart on entering the ministry; but, owing to the dissuasions of his relatives and friends, who knew how pitifully meagre was a clergyman's living in those days, he reluctantly abandoned the idea and took up instead the study of medicine. After practising in Canada for several years, he returned to central New York, where, with but little help, he chopped a farm out of the wilderness, cleared it, and cultivated it, built a grist-mill and a sawmill, and at the same time acted as physician for a district fifty miles in radius.

He was in the heyday of life, prosperous, and engaged to the prettiest girl in all the countryside, when, reading in the local paper the appeal made by the Indian chief-

tains in far-away St. Louis, the old crusading fervor that had first turned his thoughts toward the ministry, flamed up clear and strong within him, and, putting comfort, prosperity, everything behind him, he applied to the American Board for appointment as a missionary to Oregon. Such a request from a man so peculiarly qualified for a wilderness career as Whitman could not well be disregarded, and in due time he received an appointment to go to the banks of the Columbia, investigate, return, and report. The wish of his life had been granted: he had become a skirmisher in the army of the church.

Accompanied by a fellow missionary, Whitman penetrated into the Western wilderness as far as the Wind River Mountains, near the present Yellowstone Park. After familiarizing themselves through talks with traders, trappers, and Indians with the conditions which prevailed in the valley of the Columbia, Whitman and his companion returned to Boston, and upon the strength of their report the American Board decided to lose no time in occupying the field. Ordered to establish a station on the Columbia, in the vicinity of Fort Walla Walla, then a post of the Hudson's Bay Company, Whitman turned the long and arduous trip across the continent into a wedding journey.

The conveyances used and the roundabout route taken by the bridal couple strikingly emphasize the primitive internal communications of the period. They drove in a sleigh from Elmira, N. Y., to Hollidaysburg, a hamlet on the Pennsylvania Canal, at the foot of the Alleghanies, the canal-boats, which were built in sections, being taken over the mountains on a railway. Travelling by the canal and its communicating water-

ways to the Ohio, they journeyed by steamboat down the Ohio to its junction with the Mississippi, up the Mississippi to St. Louis, and thence up the Missouri to Council Bluffs, where they bought a wagon (bear that wagon in mind, if you please, for you shall hear of it later on), and outfitted for the journey across the plains. Accompanied by another missionary couple, Doctor and Mrs. Spalding, they turned the noses of their mules northwestward and a week or so later caught up with an expedition sent out by the American Fur Company to its settlement of Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia.

Following the North Fork of the Platte, they crossed the Wind River Mountains within sight of the landmark which came in time to be known as Frémont's Peak, though these two young couples crossed the Great Divide six years before Frémont, "the pathfinder," ever set eyes upon it. Few women of our race have ever made so perilous or difficult a journey. Before it was half completed, the party, owing to a miscalculation, ran out of flour and for weeks on end were forced to live on jerked buffalo meat and tea. Crossing the Snake River at a point where it was upward of a mile in width, the wagon was capsized by the velocity of the current, and the mules, on which the women had been put for safety, becoming entangled in the harness, their riders escaped drowning by what the missionaries devoutly ascribed to a miracle and the rough-spoken frontiersmen to "damned good luck." Another river they crossed by means of a dried elkskin with two ropes attached, on which they lay flat and perfectly motionless while two Indian women, holding the ropes in their teeth, swam the stream, drawing this unstable ferry behind them.

At Fort Hall, near the present site of Pocatello, Idaho, they came upon the southernmost of that chain of trading-posts with which the Hudson's Bay Company sought to guard the enormous territory which, without so much as a "by your leave," it had taken for its own. Here Captain Grant, the company's factor, made a determined effort to induce Whitman to abandon the wagon that he had brought with him across the continent in the face of almost insuperable obstacles. But the obstinacy that had caused the folks in Plainfield to shake their heads when the name of young Marcus Whitman was mentioned now stood him in good stead, for the more persistent the Englishman became in his objections the more adamantine grew the American in his determination to cling at all costs to his wagon, for no one knew better than Whitman that this had proved the most successful of the methods pursued by the great British fur monopoly to discourage the colonization of the territory wherein it conducted its operations.

The officials of the Hudson's Bay Company well knew that the colonization of the valley of the Columbia by Americans meant not only the end of their enormously profitable monopoly but the end of British domination in that region. Though they did not have it in their power to forcibly prevent Americans from entering the country, they argued that there could be no colonization on a large scale unless the settlers had wagons in which to transport their seeds and farming implements. Hence the company adopted the policy of stationing its agents along the main routes of travel with instructions to stop at nothing short of force to detain the wagons. And until Marcus Whitman came this policy had accomplished the desired result, the

specious arguments of Captain Grant having proved so successful, indeed, that the stockade at Fort Hall was filled with abandoned wagons and farming implements which would have been of inestimable value to the settlers who had been persuaded or bullied into leaving them behind.

But Whitman was made of different stuff, and the English official might as well have tried to argue the Snake River out of its course as to argue this hard-headed Yankee into giving up his wagon. Though it twice capsized and was all but lost in the swollen streams, though once it fell over a precipice and more than once went rolling down a mountainside, though for miles on end it was held on the narrow, winding mountain trails by means of drag-ropes, and though it became so dilapidated in time that it finished its journey on two wheels instead of four, the ramshackle old vehicle, thanks to Whitman's bulldog grit and determination, was hauled over the mountains and was the first vehicle to enter the forbidden land. I have laid stress upon this incident of the wagon, because, as things turned out, it proved a vital factor in the winning of Oregon. "For want of a nail the shoe was lost," runs the ancient doggerel; "for want of a shoe the horse was lost; for want of a horse the rider was lost; for want of a rider the kingdom was lost." And, had it not been for this decrepit old wagon of Whitman's, a quarter of a million square miles of the most fertile land between the oceans would have been lost to the Union.

Seven months after helping his bride into the sleigh at Elmira, Whitman drove his gaunt mule-team into the gate of the stockade at Fort Walla Walla. To-day one can make that same journey in a little more than four

days and sit in a green plush chair all the way. The news of Whitman's coming had preceded him, and an enormous concourse of Indians, arrayed in all their barbaric finery, was assembled to greet the man who had journeyed so many moons to bring them the white man's Book of Heaven. Picture that quartet of missionaries—skirmishers of the church, pickets of progress, advance-guards of civilization—as they stood on the banks of the Columbia one September morning in 1836 and consulted as to how to begin the work they had been sent to do. It was all new. There were no precedents to guide them. How would you begin, my friends, were you suddenly set down in the middle of a wilderness four thousand miles from home, with instructions to Christianize and civilize the savages who inhabited it?

Whitman, in whom diplomacy lost an adept when he became a missionary, appreciated that the first thing for him to do, if he was to be successful in his mission, was to win the confidence of the ruling powers of Oregon—the Hudson's Bay Company officials at Fort Vancouver. This necessitated another journey of three hundred miles, but it could be made in canoes with Indian paddlers. Doctor McLoughlin, the stern old Scotchman who was chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company and whose word was law throughout a region larger than all the States east of the Mississippi put together, had to be able, from the very nature of his business, to read the characters of men as students read a book; and he was evidently pleased with what he read in the face of the American missionary, for he gave both permission and assistance in establishing a mission station at Waiilatpui, twenty-five miles from Walla Walla.

Whitman's first move in his campaign for the civiliza-

tion of the Indians was to induce them to build permanent homes and to plough and sow. This the Hudson's Bay officials had always discouraged. They did not want their savage allies to be transformed into tillers of the soil; they wanted them to remain nomads and hunters, ready to move hundreds of miles in quest of furs. The only parallels in modern times to the greed, selfishness, and cruelty which characterized the administration of the Hudson's Bay Company have been the rule of the Portuguese in Mozambique and Angola and of King Leopold in the Congo.

At this time Oregon was a sort of no man's land, to which neither England nor the United States had laid definite claim, though the former, realizing the immensity of its natural resources and the enormous strategic value that would accrue from its possession, had long cast covetous eyes upon it. The Americans of that period, on the contrary, knew little about Oregon and cared less, regarding the proposals for its acquisition with the same distrust with which the Americans of to-day regard any suggestion for extending our boundaries below the Rio Grande.

Daniel Webster had said on the floor of the United States Senate: "What do we want with this vast, worthless area, this region of savages and wild beasts, of shifting sands and whirlwinds of dust, of cactus and prairie-dogs? To what use could we ever hope to put these great deserts or these endless mountain ranges, impenetrable and covered to their base with eternal snow? What can we ever hope to do with the western coast, a coast of three thousand miles, rock-bound, cheerless, and uninviting, and not a harbor on it? Mr. President, I will never vote one cent from the public

treasury to place the Pacific coast one inch nearer to Boston."

The name Oregon, it must be borne in mind, had a very much broader significance then than now, for the territory generally considered to be referred to by the term comprised the whole of the present States of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, and a portion of Montana.

Notwithstanding the systematic efforts of the Hudson's Bay Company to keep them out, a considerable number of Americans—perhaps two or three hundred in all—had settled in the country watered by the Columbia, but they were greatly outnumbered by the Canadians and British, who held the balance of power. The American settlers believed that, under the terms of the treaty of 1819, whichever nation settled and organized the territory that nation would hold it. Though this was not directly affirmed in the terms of that treaty, it was the common sentiment of the statesmen of the period, Webster, then Secretary of State, having said, in the course of a letter to the British minister at Washington: "The ownership of the whole country (Oregon) will likely follow the greater settlement and larger amount of population."

The missionaries, recognizing the incalculable value of the country which the American Government was deliberately throwing away, did everything in their power to encourage immigration. Their glowing accounts of the fertility of the soil, the balmy climate, the wealth of timber, the incalculable water-power, the wealth in minerals, had each year induced a limited number of daring souls to make the perilous and costly journey across the plains. In the autumn of 1842 a

much larger party than any that had hitherto attempted the journey—one hundred and twenty in all—reached Waiilatpui. Among them was a highly educated and unusually well-informed man—General Amos Lovejoy. He was thoroughly posted in national affairs, and it was in the course of a conversation with him that Doctor Whitman first learned that the Webster-Ashburton treaty would probably be ratified before the adjournment of Congress in the following March. It was generally believed that this treaty related to the entire boundary between the United States and England's North American possessions, the popular supposition being that it provided for the cession of the Oregon region to Great Britain in return for fishing rights off the coast of Newfoundland.

Doctor Whitman instantly saw that, as a result of the incredible ignorance and short-sightedness of the statesmen—or, rather, the politicians who paraded as statesmen—at Washington, this great, rich territory was quietly slipping away from us without a protest. There was but one thing to do in such a crisis. He must set out for Washington. Though four thousand miles of Indian-haunted wilderness lay between him and the white city on the Potomac, he did not hesitate. Though winter was at hand, and the passes would be deep in snow and the plains destitute of pasturage, he did not falter. Though there was a rule of the American Board that no missionary could leave his post without obtaining permission from headquarters in Boston, Whitman shouldered all the responsibility. "I did not expatriate myself when I became a missionary," was his reply to some objection. "Even if the Board dismisses me, I will do what I can to save Oregon to the nation. My

life is of but little worth if I can keep this country for the American people."*

Whitman's friends in Oregon felt that he was starting on a ride into the valley of the shadow of death. They knew from their own experiences the terrible hardships of such a journey even in summer, when there was grass to feed the horses and men could live with comfort in the open air. It was resolved that he must not make the journey alone, and a call was made for a volunteer to accompany him, whereupon General Amos Lovejoy stepped forward and said quietly: "I will go with Doctor Whitman."

The doctor planned to start in five days, but, while dining with the Hudson's Bay officials at Fort Walla Walla, an express messenger of the company arrived from Fort Colville, three hundred and fifty miles up the Columbia, and electrified his audience by announcing that a party of one hundred and forty British and Canadian colonists were on the road to Oregon. A young English clergyman, carried away with enthusiasm, sprang to his feet, waved his napkin above his head and shouted: "We've got the country—the Yankees are too late! Hurrah for Oregon!" Whitman, appreciating that things had now reached a pass where even hours were precious, quietly excused himself, hurried back to

* It is a regrettable fact that this, one of the finest episodes in our national history, from being a subject of honest controversy has degenerated into an embittered and rancorous quarrel, some of Doctor Whitman's detractors, not content with questioning the motives which animated him in his historic ride, having gone so far as to cast doubts on the fact of the ride itself and even to assail the character of the great missionary. Full substantiation of the episode as I have told it may be found, however, in Barrows's "Oregon, the Struggle for Possession," Johnson's "History of Oregon," Dye's "McLoughlin and Old Oregon," and Nixon's "How Marcus Whitman Saved Oregon," an array of authorities which seem to me sufficient.

the mission at Waiilatpui, and made preparations for an immediate departure. The strictest secrecy was enjoined upon all the Americans whom Whitman had taken into his confidence, for had a rumor of his intentions reached British ears at this juncture it might have ruined everything. So it was given out that he was returning to Boston to advise the American Board against the contemplated removal of its missions in Oregon—an explanation which was true as far as it went.

On the morning of October 3, 1842, Whitman, saying good-by to his wife and home, climbed into his saddle and with General Lovejoy, their half-breed guide, and three pack-mules set out on the ride that was to win us an empire. The little group of American missionaries and settlers whom he left behind gave him a rousing cheer as he rode off and then stood in silence with choking throats and misted eyes until the heroic doctor and his companions were swallowed by the forest.

With horses fresh, they reached Fort Hall in eleven days, where the English factor, Captain Grant—the same man who, six years before, had attempted to prevent Whitman from taking his wagon into Oregon—possibly guessing at their mission, did his best to detain them. Learning at Fort Hall that the northern tribes were on the war-path, Whitman and his companions struck southward in the direction of Great Salt Lake, planning to work from there eastward, via Fort Uintah and Fort Uncompahgre, to Santa Fé, and thence by the Santa Fé trail to St. Louis, which was on the borders of civilization.

The journey from Fort Hall to Fort Uintah was one long nightmare, the temperature falling at times to forty degrees below zero and the snow being so deep in places

that the horses could scarcely struggle through. While crossing the mountains on their way to Taos they were caught in a blinding snow-storm, in which, with badly frozen limbs, they wandered aimlessly for hours. Finally upon the guide admitting that he was lost and could go no farther, they sought refuge in a deep ravine. Whitman dismounted and, kneeling in the snow, prayed for guidance. Can't you picture the scene: the lonely, rock-walled gorge; the shivering animals standing dejectedly, heads to the ground and reins trailing; the general, muffled to the eyes in furs; the impassive, blanketed half-breed; in the centre, upon his knees, the indomitable missionary, praying to the God of storms; and the snowflakes falling swiftly, silently, upon everything? As though in answer to the doctor's prayers the lead-mule, which had been left to himself, suddenly started plunging through the snow-drifts as though on an urgent errand. Whereupon the guide called out: "This old mule'll find the way back to camp if he kin live long 'nough to git there." And he did.

The next morning the guide said flatly that he would go no farther.

"I know this country," he declared, "an' I know when things is possible an' when they ain't. It ain't possible to git through, an' it's plumb throwin' your lives away to try it. I'm finished."

This was a staggering blow for Whitman, for he was already ten days behind his schedule. But he was far from being beaten. Telling Lovejoy to remain in camp and recuperate the animals—which he did by feeding them on brush and the inner bark of willows, for there was no other fodder—Whitman turned back to Fort Uncompahgre, where he succeeded in obtaining a stouter-

hearted guide. In a week he had rejoined Lovejoy. The storm had ceased, and with rested animals they made good progress over the mountains to the pyramid pueblo of Taos, the home of Kit Carson. Tarrying there but a few hours, worn and weary though they were, they pressed on to the banks of the Red River, a stream which is dangerous even in summer, only to find a fringe of solid ice upon each shore, with a rushing torrent, two hundred feet wide, between. For some minutes the guide studied it in silence. "It's too dangerous to cross," he said at last decisively.

"Dangerous or not, we *must* cross it, and at once," answered Whitman. Cutting a stout willow pole, eight feet or so in length, he put it on his shoulder and remounted.

"Now, boys," he ordered, "shove me off." Following the doctor's directions, Lovejoy and the guide urged the trembling beast onto the slippery ice and then gave him a sudden shove which sent him, much against his will, into the freezing water. Both horse and rider remained for a moment out of sight, then rose to the surface well toward the middle of the stream, the horse swimming desperately. As they reached the opposite bank the doctor's ingenuity in providing himself with the pole quickly became apparent, for with it he broke the fringe of ice and thus enabled his exhausted horse to gain a footing and scramble ashore. Wood was plentiful, and he soon had a roaring fire. In a wild country, when one animal has gone ahead the others will always follow, so the general and the guide had no great difficulty in inducing their horses and pack-mules to make the passage of the river, rejoining Whitman upon the opposite bank.

Despite the fact that they found plenty of wood along the route that they had taken, which was fully a thousand miles longer than the northern course would have been, all the party were severely frozen, Whitman suffering excruciating pain from his frozen ears, hands, and feet. The many delays had not only caused the loss of precious time, but they had completely exhausted their provisions. A dog had accompanied the party, and they ate him. A mule came next, and that kept them until they reached Santa Fé, where there was plenty. Santa Fé—that oldest city of European occupation on the continent—welcomed and fed them.

From there over the famous Santa Fé trail to Bent's Fort, a fortified settlement on the Arkansas, was a long journey but, compared with what they had already gone through, an easy one. A long day's ride northeastward from this lonely outpost of American civilization, and they found across their path a tributary of the Arkansas. On the opposite shore was wood in plenty. On their side there was none, and the river was frozen over with smooth, clear ice, scarce strong enough to hold a man. They must have wood or they would perish from the cold; so Whitman, taking the axe, lay flat upon the ice and snaked himself across, cut a sufficient supply of fuel and returned the way he went, pushing it before him. While he was cutting it, however, an unfortunate incident occurred: the axe-helve was splintered. This made no particular difference at the moment, for the doctor wound the break in the handle with a thong of buckskin. But when they were in camp that night a famished wolf, attracted by the smell of the fresh buckskin, carried off axe and all, and they could find no trace of it. Had it happened a few hundred miles back it would have meant

the failure of the expedition, if not the death of Whitman and his companions. On such apparently insignificant trifles do the fate of nations sometimes hang.

Crossing the plains of what are now the States of Oklahoma and Kansas, great packs of gaunt, gray timber-wolves surrounded their tent each night and were kept at bay only at the price of unceasing vigilance, one member of the party always remaining on guard with a loaded rifle. The moment a wolf was shot its famished companions would pounce upon it and tear it to pieces. From Bent's Fort to St. Louis was, strangely enough, one of the most dangerous portions of the journey, for, while heretofore the chief dangers had come from cold, starvation, and savage beasts, here they were in hourly danger from still more savage men, for in those days the Santa Fé trail was frequented by bandits, horse-thieves, renegade Indians, fugitives from justice, and the other desperate characters who haunted the outskirts of civilization and preyed upon the unprotected traveller. Notwithstanding these dangers, of which he had been repeatedly warned at Santa Fé and Bent's Fort, the doctor, leaving Lovejoy and the guide to follow him with the pack-animals, pushed on through this perilous region alone, but lost his way and spent two precious days in finding it again—a punishment, he said, for having travelled on the Sabbath.

The only occasion throughout all his astounding journey when this man of iron threatened to collapse was when, upon reaching St. Louis, in February, 1843, he learned, in answer to his eager inquiries, that the Ashburton treaty had been signed on August 9, long before he left Oregon, and that it had been ratified by the Senate on November 10, while he was floundering in the

mountain snows near Fort Uncompahgre. For a moment the missionary's mahogany-tanned face went white and his legs threatened to give way beneath him. Could it be that this was the end of his dream of national expansion? Was it possible that his heroic ride had been made for naught? But summoning up his courage he managed to ask: "Is the question of the Oregon boundary still open?" When he learned that the treaty had only settled the question of a few square miles in Maine, and that the matter of the northwest boundary was still pending, the revulsion was so great that he reeled and nearly fell. God be praised! There was still time for him to get to Washington! The river was frozen and he had to depend upon the stage, and an overland journey from St. Louis to Washington in midwinter was no light matter. But to Whitman, with muscles like steel springs, a thousand miles by stagecoach over atrocious roads was not an obstacle worthy of discussion.

He arrived at Washington on the 3d of March—just five months from the Columbia to the Potomac—in the same rough garments he had worn upon his ride, for he had neither time nor opportunity to get others. Soiled and greasy buckskin breeches, sheepskin *chaparejos*, fleece side out, boot-moccasins of elkskin, a cap of raccoon fur with the tail hanging down behind, frontier fashion, and a buffalo greatcoat with a hood for stormy weather, composed a costume that did not show one inch of woven fabric. His face, storm-tanned to the color of a much-smoked meerschaum, carried all the iron-gray whiskers that five months' absence from a razor could put upon it.

I doubt, indeed, if the shop-windows of the national

capital have ever reflected a more picturesque or striking figure. But he had no time to take note of the sensation which his appearance created in the streets of Washington. Would he be granted an audience with the President? Would he be believed? Would his mission prove successful? Those were the questions that tormented him.

Those were days when the chief executive of the nation was hedged by less formality than he is in these busier times, and President Tyler promptly received him. Some day, perhaps, the people of one of those great States formed from the territory which he saved to the Union will commission a famous artist to paint a picture of that historic meeting: the President, his keen, attentive face framed by the flaring collar and high black stock of the period, sitting low in his armchair; the great Secretary of State, his mane brushed back from his tremendous forehead, seated beside him; and, standing before them, the preacher-pioneer, bearded to the eyes, with frozen limbs, in his worn and torn garments of fur and leather, pleading for Oregon.

The burden of his argument was that the treaty of 1819 must be immediately abrogated and that the authority of the United States be extended over the valley of the Columbia. He painted in glowing words the limitless resources, the enormous wealth in minerals and timber and water-power of this land beyond the Rockies; he told his hearers, spellbound now by the interest and vividness of the narrative, of the incredible fertility of the virgin soil, in which anything would grow; of the vastness of the forests; of the countless leagues of navigable rivers; of the healthful and delightful climate; of the splendid harbors along the coast; the last, but by

no means least, of those hardy pioneers who had gone forth to settle this rich new region at peril of their lives and who, through him, were pleading to be placed under the shadow of their own flag.

But Daniel Webster still clung obstinately to his belief that Oregon was a wilderness not worth the having.

"It is impossible to build a wagon-road over the mountains," he asserted positively. "My friend Sir George Simpson, the British minister, has told me so."

"There *is* a wagon-road over the mountains, Mr. Secretary," retorted Whitman, "for I have made it."

It was the rattletrap old prairie-schooner that the missionary had dragged into Oregon on two wheels in the face of British opposition that clinched and copper-riveted the business. It knocked all the argument out of the famous Secretary, who, for almost the first time in his life, found himself at a loss for an answer. Here was a man of a type quite different from any that Webster had encountered in all his political experience. He had no axe to grind; he asked for nothing; he wanted no money, or office, or lands, or anything except that which would add to the glory of the flag, the prosperity of the people, the wealth of the nation. It was a powerful appeal to the heart of President Tyler.

"What you have told us has interested me deeply, Doctor Whitman," said the President at length. "Now tell me exactly what it is that you wish me to do."

"If it is true, Mr. President," replied Whitman, "that, as Secretary Webster himself has said, 'the ownership of Oregon is very likely to follow the greater settlement and the larger amount of population,' then all I ask is that you won't barter away Oregon or permit of British interference until I can organize a company

of settlers and lead them across the plains to colonize the country. And this I will try to do at once."

"Your credentials as a missionary vouch for your character, Doctor Whitman," replied the President. "Your extraordinary ride and your frost-bitten limbs vouch for your patriotism. The request you make is a reasonable one. I am glad to grant it."

"That is all I ask," said Whitman, rising.

The object that had started him on his four-thousand-mile journey having been attained, Whitman wasted no time in resting. His work was still unfinished. It was up to him to get his settlers into Oregon, for the increasing arrogance of the Hudson's Bay Company confirmed him in his belief that the sole hope of saving the valley of the Columbia lay in a prompt and overwhelming American immigration. He had, indeed, arrived at Washington in the very nick of time, for, if prior to his arrival the British Government had renewed its offer of compromising by taking as the international boundary the forty-ninth parallel to the Columbia and thence down that river to the Pacific—thus giving the greater part of the present State of Washington to England—there is but little doubt that the offer would have been accepted. But the promise made by President Tyler to Whitman committed him against taking any action.

Meanwhile General Lovejoy had been busy upon the frontier spreading the news that early in the spring Doctor Whitman and himself would guide a body of settlers across the Rockies to Oregon. The news spread up and down the border like fire in dry grass. The start was to be made from Weston, not far from where Kansas City now stands, and soon the emigrants came pouring in—men who had fought the Indians and the wilderness all

the way from the Great Lakes to the Gulf; men who had followed Boone and Bowie and Carson and Davy Crockett; a hardy, sturdy, tenacious breed who were quite ready to fight, if need be, to hold this northwestern land where they had determined to build their homes.

The grass was late, that spring of 1843, and the expedition did not get under way until the last week in June. At Fort Hall they met with the customary discouragements and threats from Captain Grant, but Whitman, like a modern Moses, urged them forward. On pushed the winding train of white-topped wagons, crossing the sun-baked prairies, climbing the Rockies, fording the intervening rivers, creeping along the edge of perilous precipices, until at last they stood upon the summit of the westernmost range, with the promised land lying spread below them. Whitman, the man to whom it was all due, reined in his horse and watched the procession of wagons, bearing upward of a thousand men, women, and children, make its slow progress down the mountains. He must have been very happy, for he had added the great, rich empire which the term Oregon implied to the Union.*

For four years more Doctor Whitman continued his work of caring for the souls and the bodies of red men and white alike at the mission station of Waiilatpui. On August 6, 1846, as a direct result of his great ride, was signed the treaty whereby England surrendered her claims to Oregon. In those days news travelled slowly along the frontier, and it was the following spring before

* Years afterward Daniel Webster remarked to a friend: "It is safe to assert that our country owes it to Doctor Whitman and his associate missionaries that all the territory west of the Rocky Mountains and north of the Columbia is not now owned by England and held by the Hudson's Bay Company."—Dye's "McLoughlin and Old Oregon."

the British outposts along the Columbia learned that the British minister at Washington had been beaten by the diplomacy of a Yankee missionary and that the great, despotic company which for well-nigh two centuries had been in undisputed control of this region, and which had come to regard it as inalienably its own, would have to move on. From that moment Marcus Whitman was a doomed man, for it was a long-standing boast of the company that no man defied it—and lived.

The end came with dramatic suddenness. Early in the afternoon of November 20, 1847, Doctor Whitman was sitting in the mission station prescribing medicine, as was his custom, for those of his Indians who were ailing, when a blanketed warrior stole up behind him on silent moccasins and buried a hatchet in his brain. Then hell broke loose. Whooping fiends in paint and feathers appeared as from the pit. Mrs. Whitman was butchered as she knelt by her dying husband, their scalps being torn from their heads before they had ceased to breathe. Fourteen other missionaries were murdered by the red-skinned monsters and forty women and children were carried into a captivity that was worse than death. And this by the Indians who, just fifteen years before, had pleaded to have sent them the white man's Book of Heaven! Though no conclusive proof has ever been produced that they were whooped on to their atrocious deed by emissaries of the great monopoly which had been forced out of Oregon as a result of Whitman's ride, there is but little doubt that it instigated the massacre. Whitman had snatched an empire from its greedy fingers, and he had to pay the price.

Though Marcus Whitman added to the national domain a territory larger and possessing greater natural

resources than the German Empire, though but for him Portland and Tacoma and Seattle and Spokane would be British instead of American, no memorial of him can be found in their parks or public buildings. Instead of honoring the man who discovered the streams and forests from which they are growing rich, who won for them the very lands on which they dwell, unworthy discussions and debates as to the motives which animated him are the only tributes which have been paid him by the people for whom he did so much. But he sleeps peacefully on beside the mighty river, oblivious to the pettiness and ingratitude of it all. When history grants Marcus Whitman the tardy justice of perspective, over that lonely grave a monument worthy of a nation-builder shall rise.

THE FLAG OF THE BEAR

Because the battles which marked its establishment were really only skirmishes, in which but an insignificant number of lives were lost, and because it boasted less than a thousand citizens all told, certain of our historians have been so undiscerning as to assert that the Bear Flag Republic was nothing but a travesty and a farce. Therein they are wrong. Though it is doubtless true that the handful of frontiersmen who raised their home-made flag, with its emblem of a grizzly bear, over the Californian presidio of Sonoma on that July morning in 1846 took themselves much more seriously than the circumstances warranted, it is equally true that their action averted the seizure of California by England, and by forcing the hand of the administration at Washington was primarily responsible for adding what is now California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and more than half of Wyoming and Colorado to the Union. The series of intrigues and affrays and insurrections which resulted in the Pacific coast becoming American instead of European form a picturesque, exciting, and virtually unwritten chapter in our national history, a chapter in which furtive secret agents and haughty caballeros, pioneers in fringed buckskin, and naval officers in gold-laced uniforms all played their greater or their lesser parts.

THE FLAG OF THE BEAR

To understand fully the conditions which led up to the "Bear Flag War," as it has been called, it is necessary to go back for a moment to the first quarter of the last century, when the territory of the United States ended at the Rocky Mountains and the red-white-and-green flag of Mexico floated over the whole of that vast, rich region which lay beyond. Under the Mexican régime the territory lying west of the Sierra Nevadas was divided into the provinces of Alta (or Upper) and Baja (or Lower) California, the population of the two provinces about 1845 totalling not more than fifteen thousand souls, nine-tenths of whom were Mexicans, Spaniards, and Indians, the rest American and European settlers. The foreigners, among whom Americans greatly predominated, soon became influential out of all proportion to their numbers. This was particularly true of the Americans, who, solidified by common interests, common dangers, and common ambitions, obtained large grants of land, built houses which in certain cases were little short of forts, frequently married into the most aristocratic of the Californian families, and before long practically controlled the commerce of the entire territory.

It was only to be expected, therefore, that the Mexicans should become more and more apprehensive of American ambitions. Nor did President Jackson's offer, in 1835, to buy Southern California—an offer which was promptly refused—serve to do other than strengthen

these apprehensions. And to make matters worse, if such a thing were possible, Commodore T. apCatesby Jones, having heard a rumor that war had broken out between the United States and Mexico, and having reason to believe that the British were preparing to seize California, landed a force of bluejackets and marines, and on October 21, 1842, raised the American flag over the presidio at Monterey.

Although Commodore Jones, finding he had acted upon misinformation, lowered the flag next day and tendered an apology to the provincial officials, the incident did not tend to relieve the tension which existed between the Mexicans and the Americans, for it emphasized the ease with which the country could be seized, and hinted with unmistakable plainness at the ultimate intentions of the United States. That our government intended to annex the Californias at the first opportunity that offered the Mexicans were perfectly aware, for, aroused by the descriptions of the unbelievable beauty and fertility of the country as sent back by those daring souls who had made their way across the ranges, the hearts of our people were set upon its acquisition. The great Bay of San Francisco, large enough to shelter the navies of the world and the gateway to the Orient, the fruitful, sun-kissed land beyond the Sierras, the political domination of America, and the commercial domination of the Pacific—such were the visions which inspired our people and the motives which animated our leaders, and which were intensified by the fear of England's designs upon this Western land.

As the numbers of the American settlers gradually increased, the jealousy and suspicion of the Mexican officials became more pronounced. As early as 1826

they had driven Captain Jedediah Smith, the first American to make his way to California by the overland route, back into the mountains, in the midst of winter, without companions and without provisions, to be killed by the Indians. In 1840 more than one hundred American settlers were suddenly arrested by the Mexican authorities on a trumped-up charge of having plotted against the government, marched under military guard to Monterey, and confined in the prison there under circumstances of the most barbarous cruelty, some fifty of them being eventually deported to Mexico in chains.

Thomas O. Larkin, the American consul at Monterey, upon visiting the prisoners in the local jail where they were confined, found that the cells had no floors, and that the poor fellows stood in mud and water to their ankles. Sixty of the prisoners he found crowded into a single room, twenty feet long and eighteen wide, in which they were so tightly packed that they could not all sit at the same time, much less lie down. The room being without windows or other means of ventilation, the air quickly became so fetid that they were able to live only by dividing themselves into platoons which took turns in standing at the door and getting a few breaths of air through the bars.

These men, whose only crime was that they were Americans, were confined in this hell-hole for eight days with no food save such as their friends were able to smuggle in to them by bribing the sentries. And this treatment was accorded them, remember, not because they were conspirators—for no one knew better than the Mexican authorities that they were not—but because it seemed the easiest means of driving them out

of the country. Throughout the half-dozen years that ensued American settlers were subjected to a systematic campaign of annoyance, persecution, and imprisonment on innumerable frivolous pretexts, being released only on their promise to leave California immediately. By 1845, therefore, the harassed Americans, in sheer desperation, were ready to grasp the first opportunity which presented itself to end this intolerable tyranny for good and all.

It was not only the outrageous treatment to which they were subjected, however, nor the weakness and instability of the government under which they were living, nor even the insecurity of their lives and property and the discouragements to industry, which led the American settlers to decide to end Mexican rule in the Californias. Texas had recently been annexed by the United States against the protests of Mexico, an American army of invasion was massed along the Rio Grande, and war was certain. It required no extraordinary degree of intelligence, then, to foresee that the coming hostilities would almost inevitably result in Mexico losing her Californian provinces. Now it was a matter of common knowledge that the Mexican Government was seriously considering the advisability of ceding the Californias to Great Britain, and thus accomplishing the threefold purpose of wiping out the large Mexican debt due to British bankers, of winning the friendship and possibly the active assistance of England in the approaching war with the United States, and of preventing the Californias from falling into American hands.

Meanwhile the authorities at Washington had not been idle. Though Larkin was ostensibly the American

consul at Monterey and nothing more, in reality he was clothed with far greater powers, having been hurried from Washington to California for the express purpose of secretly encouraging an insurrectionary movement among the American settlers, and of keeping our government informed of the plans of the Mexicans and British. Receiving information that a powerful British fleet—the largest, in fact, which had ever been seen in Pacific waters—was about to sail for the coast of California, the administration promptly issued orders for a squadron of war-ships under Commodore John Drake Sloat to proceed at full speed to the Pacific coast, the commander being given secret instructions to back up Consul Larkin in any action which he might take, and upon receiving word that the United States had declared war against Mexico to immediately occupy the Californian ports.

Then ensued one of the most momentous races in history, over a course extending half-way round the world, the contestants being the war-fleets of the two most powerful maritime nations, and the prize seven hundred thousand square miles of immensely rich territory and the mastery of the Pacific. Commodore Sloat laid his course around the Horn, while the English commander, Admiral Trowbridge, chose the route through the Indian Ocean. The first thing he saw as he entered the Bay of Monterey was the American squadron lying at anchor in the harbor.

Never was there a better example of that form of territorial expansion which has come to be known as "pacific penetration" than the American conquest of California; never were the real designs of a nation and the schemes of its secret agents more successfully hidden.

Consul Larkin, as I have already said, was quietly working, under confidential instructions from the State Department, to bring about a revolution in California without overt aid from the United States; the Californian coast towns lay under the guns of American warships, whose commanders likewise had secret instructions to land marines and take possession of the country at the first opportunity that presented itself; and, as though to complete the chain of American emissaries, early in 1846 there came riding down from the Sierran passes, at the head of what pretended to be an exploring and scientific expedition, the man who was to set the machinery of conquest actually in motion.

The commander of the expedition was a young captain of engineers, named John Charles Frémont, who, as the result of two former journeys of exploration into the wilderness beyond the Rockies, had already won the sobriquet of "The Pathfinder." Born in Savannah, of a French father and a Virginian mother, he was a strange combination of aristocrat and frontiersman. Dashing, debonair, fearless, reckless, a magnificent horseman, a dead shot, a hardy and intrepid explorer, equally at home at a White House ball or at an Indian powwow, he was probably the most picturesque and romantic figure in the United States. These characteristics, combined with extreme good looks, a gallant manner, and the great public reputation he had won by the vivid and interesting accounts he had published of his two earlier journeys, had completely captured the popular imagination, so that the young explorer had become a national idol.

In the spring of 1845 he was despatched by the national government on a third expedition, which had as

its ostensible object the discovery of a practicable route from the Rocky Mountains to the mouth of the Columbia River, but which was really to lend encouragement to the American settlers in California in any secession movement which they might be planning and to afford them active assistance should war be declared. Just how far the government had instructed Frémont to go in fomenting a revolution will probably never be known, but there is every reason to believe that his father-in-law, United States Senator Benton, had advised him to seize California if an opportunity presented itself, and to trust to luck (and the senator's influence) that the government would approve rather than repudiate his action.

All told, Frémont's expedition numbered barely threescore men—no great force, surely, with which to overthrow a government and win an empire. In advance of the little column rode the four Delaware braves whom Frémont had brought with him from the East to act as scouts and trackers, and whose cunning and woodcraft he was willing to match against that of the Indians of the plains. Close on their heels rode the Pathfinder himself, clad from neck to heel in fringed buckskin, at his belt a heavy army revolver and one of those vicious, double-bladed knives to which Colonel Bowie, of Texas, had already given his name, and on his head a jaunty, broad-brimmed hat, from beneath which his long, yellow hair fell down upon his shoulders. At his bridle arm rode Kit Carson, the most famous of the plainsmen, whose exploits against the Indians were even then familiar stories in every American household. Behind these two stretched out the rank and file of the expedition—bronze-faced, bearded, resolute men, well

mounted, heavily armed, and all wearing the serviceable dress of the frontier.

Frémont found the American settlers scattered through the interior in a state of considerable alarm, for rumors had reached them that the Mexican Government had decided to drive them out of the country, and that orders had been issued to the provincial authorities to incite the Indians against them. As they dwelt for the most part in small, isolated communities, scattered over a great extent of country, it was obvious that, if these rumors were true, their lives were in imminent peril. They had every reason to expect, moreover, that the news of war between Mexico and the United States would bring down on them those forms of punishment and retaliation for which the Mexicans were notorious. They were confronted, therefore, with the alternative of abandoning the homes they had built and the fields they had tilled and seeking refuge in flight across the mountains, or of remaining to face those perils inseparable from border warfare. Nor did it take them long to decide upon resistance, for they were not of the breed which runs away.

Leaving most of his men encamped in the foot-hills, Frémont pushed on to Monterey, then the most important settlement in Upper California, and the seat of the provincial government, where he called upon Don José Castro, the Mexican commandant, explained the purposes of his expedition, and requested permission for his party to proceed northward to the Columbia through the San Joaquin valley. This permission Castro grudgingly gave, but scarcely had Frémont broken camp before the Mexican, who had hastily gathered an overwhelming force of soldiers and vaqueros, set out upon

the trail of the Americans with the avowed purpose of surprising and exterminating them. Fortunately for the Americans, Consul Larkin, getting wind of Castro's intended treachery, succeeded in warning Frémont, who instead of taking his chances in a battle on the plains against a greatly superior force, suddenly occupied the precipitous hill lying back of and commanding Monterey, known as the Hawk's Peak, intrenched himself there, and then sent word to Castro to come and take him. Although the Mexican commander made a military demonstration before the American intrenchments, he was wise enough to refrain from attempting to carry a position of such great natural strength and defended by such unerring shots as were Frémont's frontiersmen. Four days later Frémont, feeling that there was nothing to be gained by holding the position longer, and confident that the Mexicans would be only too glad to see his back, quietly broke camp one night and resumed his march toward Oregon.

Scarcely had he crossed the Oregon line, however, before he was overtaken by a messenger on a reeking horse, who had been despatched by Consul Larkin to inform him that an officer with urgent despatches from Washington had arrived at Monterey and was hastening northward to overtake him. Frémont immediately turned back, and on the shores of Greater Klamath Lake met Lieutenant Archibald Gillespie, who had travelled from New York to Vera Cruz by steamer, had crossed Mexico to Mazatlán on horseback, and had been brought up the Pacific coast to Monterey in an American war-ship.

The exact contents of the despatches with which Gillespie had been intrusted will probably never be

known, for having reason to believe that his mission was suspected by the Mexicans, and being fearful of arrest, he had destroyed the despatches after committing their contents to memory. These contents he communicated to Frémont, and the fact that the latter immediately turned his horse's head Californiaward is the best proof that they contained definite instructions for him to stir up the American settlers to revolt and so gain California for the Union by what some one has aptly described as "neutral conquest."

The news of Frémont's return spread among the scattered settlers as though by wireless, and from all parts of the country hardy, determined men came pouring into camp to offer him their services. But his hands were tied. His instructions from Washington, while ordering him to lend his encouragement to an insurrectionary movement, expressly forbade him to take the initiative in any hostilities until he received word that war with Mexico had been declared—and that word had not yet come. These facts he communicated to the settlers. Frémont's assurance that the American Government sympathized with their aspirations for independence, and could be counted upon to back up any action they might take to secure it, was all that the settlers asked.

On the evening of June 13, 1846, some fifty Americans living along the Sacramento River met at the ranch of an old Indian-fighter and bear-hunter named Captain Meredith, and under his leadership rode across the country in a northwesterly direction through the night. Dawn found them close to the presidio of Sonoma, which was the residence of the Mexican general Vallejo and the most important military post north of San

Francisco. Leaving their horses in the shelter of the forest, the Americans stole silently forward in the dimness of the early morning, overpowered the sentries, burst in the gates, and had taken possession of the town and surrounded the barracks before the garrison was fairly awake. General Vallejo and his officers were captured in their beds, and were sent under guard to a fortified ranch known as Sutter's Fort, which was situated some distance in the interior. In addition to the prisoners, nine field-guns, several hundred stands of arms, and a considerable supply of ammunition fell into the hands of the Americans. The first blow had been struck in the conquest of California.

The question now arose as to what they should do with the town they had captured, for Frémont had no authority to take it over for the United States, or to muster the men who took it into the American service. The embattled settlers found themselves, in fact, to be in the embarrassing position of being men without a country. After a council of war they decided to organize a *pro-tem.* government of their own to administer the territory until such time as it should be formally annexed to the United States. I doubt if a government was ever established so quickly and under such rough-and-ready circumstances. After an informal ballot it was announced that William B. Ide, a leading spirit among the settlers, had been unanimously elected governor and commander-in-chief "of the independent forces"; John H. Nash, who had been a justice of the peace in the East before he had emigrated to California, being named chief justice of the new republic.

For a full-fledged nation not to have a flag of its own was, of course, unthinkable; so, as most of its citizens

were hunters and adventurers, when some one suggested that the grizzly bear, because of its indomitable courage and tenacity and its ferocity when aroused, would make a peculiarly appropriate emblem for the new banner, the suggestion was adopted with enthusiasm, and a committee of two was appointed to put it into immediate execution. A young settler named William Ford, who had been imprisoned by the Mexicans in the jail at Sonoma, and who had been released when his countrymen captured the place, and William Todd, an emigrant from Illinois, were the makers of the flag. On a piece of unbleached cotton cloth, a yard wide and a yard and a half long, they painted the rude figure of a grizzly bear ready to give battle. This strange banner they raised, at noon on June 14, amid a storm of cheers and a salute from the captured cannon, on the staff where so recently had floated the flag of Mexico, and from it the Bear Flag Republic took its name.

Scarcely had Frémont received the news of the capture of Sonoma and the proclamation of the Bear Flag Republic than word reached him that a large force of Mexicans was on its way to retake the town. Disregarding his instructions from Washington, and throwing all caution to the winds, Frémont instantly decided to stake everything on giving his support to his imperilled countrymen. His own men reinforced by a number of volunteers, he arrived at Sonoma, after a forced march of thirty-six hours, only to find the Bear Flag men still in possession. The number of the enemy, as well as their intentions, had, it seems, been greatly exaggerated, the force in question being but a small party of troopers which Castro had despatched to the Mission of San Rafael, on the north shore of San Francisco Bay, to

prevent several hundred cavalry remounts which were stabled there from falling into the hands of the Americans.

Realizing the value of these horses to the settlers in the guerilla campaign which seemed likely to ensue, Frémont succeeded in capturing them after a sharp skirmish with the Mexicans. Hurrying back to Sonoma, he learned that during his absence Ide and his men had repulsed an attack by a body of Mexican regulars, under General de la Torre, reinforced by a band of ruffians and desperadoes led by an outlaw named Padilla, inflicting so sharp a defeat that the only enemies left in that part of the country were the scattered fugitives from this force, these being hunted down and summarily dealt with by the frontiersmen. Having now irrevocably committed himself to the insurgent cause, and feeling that, if he were to be hanged, it might as well be for a sheep as for a lamb, Frémont decided on the capture of San Francisco.

The San Francisco of 1846 had little in common with the San Francisco of to-day, remember, for on the site where the great Western metropolis now stands there was nothing but a village consisting of a few score adobe houses and the Mexican presidio, or fort, the latter containing a considerable supply of arms and ammunition. Accompanied by Kit Carson, Lieutenant Gillespie, and a small detachment of his men, Frémont crossed the Bay of San Francisco in a sailing-boat by night, and took the Mexican garrison so completely by surprise that they surrendered without firing a shot. The gateway to the Orient was ours.

Frémont now prepared to take the offensive against Castro, who was retreating on Los Angeles, but just as

he was about to start on his march southward a messenger brought the news that Admiral Sloat, having received word that hostilities had commenced along the Rio Grande, had landed his marines at Monterey, and on July 7, to the thunder of saluting war-ships, had raised the American flag over the presidio, and had proclaimed the annexation of California to the Union. When the Bear Flag men learned the great news they went into a frenzy of enthusiasm; whooping, shouting, singing snatches of patriotic songs, and firing their pistols in the air. Quickly the standard of the fighting grizzly was lowered and the flag of stripes and stars hoisted in its place, while the rough-clad, bearded settlers, who had waited so long and risked so much that this very thing might come to pass, sang the Doxology with tears running down their faces. As the folds of the familiar banner caught the breeze and floated out over the flat-roofed houses of the little town, Ide, the late chief of the three-weeks republic, jumping on a powder-barrel, swung his sombrero in the air and shouted: "Now, boys, all together, three cheers for the Union!" The moist eyes and the lumps in the throats brought by the sight of the old flag did not prevent the little band of frontiersmen from responding with a roar which made the windows of Sonoma rattle.

Now, as a matter of fact, Admiral Sloat had placed himself in a very embarrassing position, for he had based his somewhat precipitate action in seizing California on what he had every reason to believe was authentic news that war between the United States and Mexico had actually begun, but which proved next day to be merely an unconfirmed rumor. If a state of war really did exist, then both Sloat and Frémont were justi-

fied in their aggressions; but if it did not, then they might have considerable difficulty in explaining their action in commencing hostilities against a nation with which we were at peace. So Sloat began "to get cold feet," asserting that he was forced to act as he had because he had received reliable information that the British, whose fleet was lying off Monterey, were on the point of seizing California themselves. Frémont, on his part, claimed to have acted in defense of the American settlers in the interior, who without his assistance would have been massacred by the Mexicans.

At this juncture Commodore Stockton arrived at Monterey in the frigate *Congress*, and as Sloat was now thoroughly frightened and only too glad to transfer the responsibility he had assumed to other shoulders, Stockton, who was the junior officer, asked for and readily obtained permission to assume command of the operations. Frémont, who had reached Monterey with several hundred riflemen, was appointed commander-in-chief of the land forces by Stockton, and was ordered to embark his men on one of the war-ships and proceed at once to capture San Diego, at that time by far the most important place in California. Stockton himself, after raising the American flag over San Francisco and Santa Barbara, sailed down the coast to San Pedro, the port of Los Angeles, where he disembarked a force of bluejackets and marines for the taking of the latter city, within which the Mexican commander, General Castro, had shut himself up with a considerable number of troops, and where he promised to make a desperate resistance.

As Stockton came marching up from San Pedro at the head of his column he was met by a Mexican carry-

ing a flag of truce and bearing a message from Castro warning the American commander in the most solemn terms that if his forces dared to set foot within Los Angeles they would be going to their own funerals. "Present my compliments to General Castro," Stockton told the messenger, "and ask him to have the kindness to have the church bells tolled for our funerals at eight o'clock to-morrow morning, for at that hour I shall enter the city." Upon receipt of this disconcerting message Castro slipped out of Los Angeles that night, without firing a shot in its defense, and at eight o'clock on the following morning, Stockton, just as he had promised, came riding in at the head of his men.

After garrisoning the surrounding towns and ridding the countryside of prowling bands of Mexican guerillas, Stockton officially proclaimed California a Territory of the United States, instituted a civil government along American lines, and appointed Frémont as the first Territorial governor. Before the year 1846 had drawn to a close these two Americans, the one a rough-and-ready sailor, the other a youthful and impetuous soldier, assisted by a few hundred marines and frontiersmen, had completed the conquest and pacification of a territory having a greater area and greater natural resources than those of all the countries conquered by Napoleon put together.

Thus ended the happy, lazy, luxury-loving society of Spanish California. Another society, less luxurious, less light-hearted, less contented, but more energetic, more progressive, and better fitted for the upbuilding of a nation, took its place. There are still to be found in California a few men, white-haired and stoop-shouldered now, who were themselves actors in this drama I

have described, and who delight to tell of those stirring days when Frémont and his frontiersmen came riding down from the passes, and the embattled settlers of Sonoma founded their short-lived Republic of the Bear.